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Where Have All The Courtesans Gone?

"Even the whores wear blue jeans today. There's no sense of style. And half of them are transvestites or mad. What a comedown!" Aline Roblot, alias Madame Billy, whose flourishing "maison de luxe" played host to King Farouk and Maurice Chevalier, reminisces.

By BRIAN MOYNAHAN

SHE was a peasant girl from the Burgundy wine country who took Paris by storm as a courtesan, and remained at the top of her profession until she was 77. Now, she has retired and lives in a comfortable flat in the respectable 16th district of Paris, with silver chandeliers and stuffed birds and a King Charles spaniel. But in an ungallant fit of morality, the French authorities have not let this formidable lady enjoy a well-earned rest after half a century of amusing the rich. Last week, Aline Roblot, alias Madame Billy, was fined £24,000 and given a ten months' suspended sentence for having kept the best-loved hawdy house in France.

Aline arrived in Paris to seek her fortune in 1922. "Paris is a difficult city to conquer. I was lucky," she says. "And very good-looking." It was the time of the Latin Americans, the "gauchos," who were, as the French put it, "lappidating" their fortunes.

She was taken up by the "hilean" phosphate magnate, Rene Astorica, who would ask Diaghilev's entire troupe to parties at his house on the avenue Foch. He was a neighbour of the curious Marquis of Salombrrosa, who would hire a dozen girls, dress himself up as a priest, and have them recite poetry to him. For this service, Madame Billy remembers, he did exceedingly well.

She prospered. When the second World War broke out, she had saved enough to buy a substantial house on the corner of the Avenue Kleber, close to the Ecole No. 4, Rue Paul-Valery.

soon became famous. At first it was a hotel; Edith Piaf lived on one floor, and it was there that she began her intense friendship with Jean Cocteau. Maurice Chevalier was a frequent visitor.

Gradually, Madame Billy recruited girls, and her house became the capital's most famous "maison de luxe." Although brothels were officially banned in 1946, No. 4 continued to flourish as a "clandestine" house. This was not surprising, as many of Madame Billy's clients were people of influence. By 1955, the former peasant girl had bought her own chateau.

She remembers her career as being very hard work. Even platonic relationships could be exhausting. One Englishman was a client for 20 years, until his money ran out; his stately home was sold off and Sotheby's auctioned his remaining haubles. Madame Billy nicknamed him "Sir Henry."

All he liked to do was talk. "He'd talk, talk, talk, from dinner to breakfast time, about the poetry of Francois Villon, the painting of Clouet. I had to mug it all up to show an interest."

"Sir Henry"

Henry was generous, as well he might have been, since for much of the time he thought that Madame Billy was Catherine de Medici. "He'd toss me £5,000 in notes and tell me to have a party," she says. "But he'd never open his bills or think about money. He's ruined now and sometimes scrapes enough together to telephone me from England."

Another notable eccentric, a baron, would invite girls down to his chateau for a week. His idea of fun was watching them digging up potatoes and raking the fields.

An oyster merchant was a great snob: "Every girl had to be a countess or a baroness, so I had to give elocution lessons to make them sound classy. It was all getting like My Fair Lady." There were some eccentric girls, too. Aoura, a Romanian, would work only between 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. This, she explained, did not count for anything and she was thus convinced that she was remaining faithful to her fiancé back home in Bucharest.

She was a particular favourite of the politicians who flocked to the Rue Paul-Valery of the Fourth Republic, in such numbers that Madame Billy believes she once recognised as clients, two-thirds of the men at a Legion of Honour ceremony.

"They didn't know from one day to the next whether they would still be in power," she says. "So a little indiscretion didn't go amiss. I got so many ministers turning up that we could have held a cabinet meeting in the salon."

All that changed with de Gaulle's Fifth Republic, but Madame Billy soon made up for the loss of political revenue with petrodollars. "I was on to the Arabs long before people started speaking about black gold. King Farouk was a favourite of mine; we called him 'good old fatty.' He'd pay each girl £1,000 a day and he'd have several. He had a superb memory and he was a real gentleman. His favourite was a girl called Genevieve. She's now married and in America."

Madame Billy blames President Giscard for her downfall. "He's been a real bugbear. As soon as he was elected, the taxman was round. It cost me tens of thousands of pounds. Then the police started harassing me. I'd always had the best of relations with them, but the word came down from on top that No. 4 was to be closed. I gave a great farewell party. 'Le Tout Paris' turned up." But the law pursued her into retirement and, last week, she received her belated and unprecedented fine.

After a lifetime of experience, Madame Billy has concluded that, from a courtesan's point of view, Englishmen are best: "They are very generous, and they are gentlemen, unlike all the Americans and Arabs, who spend all the time looking at their watches to make sure they get their money's worth."

"The French are also generous, and the Italians. Some people think Italy is a poor country. That is nonsense; I can vouch for it. The Swiss are fairly generous, and since their country is just one large bank, so they ought. The Japanese are very correct. The Dutch drink too much. So do the Scots."

She has no doubt that Paris was at its best between 1922 and 1926. "In those days, singers didn't marry their pianists or their press agents," she says. "They took a millionaire as a lover. The least dancer at the Casino de Paris would be a millionaire's mistress, elegant, alive with jewels, dressed to the nines."

Today, she complains, "even the whores wear blue jeans. There's no sense of style. And half of them are transvestites or mad. It's not safe. It's sordid. What a comedown!"

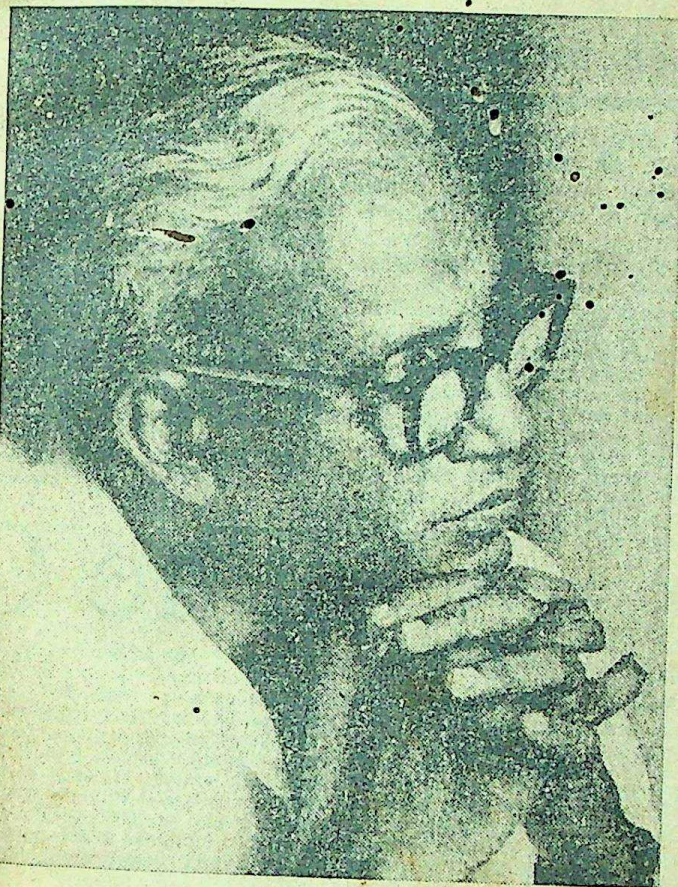
(By arrangement with The Sunday Times)

Shape Of The

Is There An Alternative?

What is required is the coming together of all the radical democratic elements in the country on the basis of a left and democratic programme.

by E. M. S. Namboodiripad



E. M. S. Namboodiripad. Photo: T. S. Nagarajan.

THE much-talked-of "charisma" of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi works no more. Mrs. Gandhi's friends and followers are wondering what will happen to her in 1985 (if not earlier) the election to the 8th Lok Sabha should take place.

The question however arises: what is the alternative if she is defeated once again? Is there any alternative at all?

There is obviously no alternative of the type that emerged in 1975. The opposition as a whole is so divided that there cannot be the type of all-in unity against the ruling party which emerged

even in 1977, let us recall. There were serious ideological differences among the parties who cooperated in defeating the Congress (I) and bringing the government into existence. Take one instance, the party

to which I belong cooperated with the rest of the opposition in fighting the Congress (I). Our contribution to the defeat of the Indira Congress was acknowledged by the entire opposition. We however made it clear that, due to our disagreement with the Janata on socio-economic policies, we reserved to ourselves the right to oppose such policies of the new Janata government as are in our view detrimental to the interests of the common people. The constituents of the newly-formed Janata too had political and organisational differences among themselves. It was this that led to the fall of the Janata government and the break-up of the Janata party.

With this experience before us, no sensible person will expect the revival of the Janata in its original form. The undivided Congress party too has gone through many changes. Groups that broke away from both these parties constitute what is

at present called "the non-communist opposition".

Neither this opposition as a whole nor any single party among them can provide an alternative when the Congress (I) is thrown out. The leaders of the BJP at one time had aspired to become such an alternative. They, however, are faced with so many problems of a political and organisational character that the question now is of preserving the internal unity and cohesion of the party.

The CPI(M) for its part makes it clear that what is required is the coming together of all the radical democratic elements in the country on the basis of a left and democratic programme opposed to the programmes of the ruling Congress (I) as well as of the bourgeois opposition parties. It is this new alliance that has to develop into the national alternative.

This being a long-term perspective, it obviously does not offer any solution to the immediate problem. This, however, does not mean that the people will tolerate the prolongation of the Congress (I) rule; they in fact are searching for a political force — either a single party as is the Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh or a combination to parties as in Karnataka — which can defeat the ruling party and provide some alternative. If the new set-up fails to satisfy their expectations, the people will certainly bring it down and bring something else in its place. They are, in other words, in the process of trial and error, and it is this search by the people that will in the end create a new alternative.

This is not to suggest that the people will spontaneously create the national alternative. Or that the political parties, press organs and other leaders of public opinion have no role to play in shaping the political developments in the country. On the contrary, they all have a key role to play. It is they who place before the people the issues which arise from time to time and explain the approaches adopted by various parties, organisations and groups, so that the people can choose for themselves.

The people have shown in all the national elections since 1952 that they are capable of choosing and throwing out the parties that exercise political power. The knocks given by them to the Congress (I) in Andhra and Karnataka are only the last link in the chain.

ned, by those who would lead the nation. It is use mincing words here. Gandhi, while he was was little better than the of a lumpen group. Yet the President of the Republic these days seem to murmur

retribution works itself out might be somewhat gory here and there, there could be occasional turmoil and confusion, certain external powers might foolishly begin to consider their Indian kingdom as a people would come through. Despite thirty-five

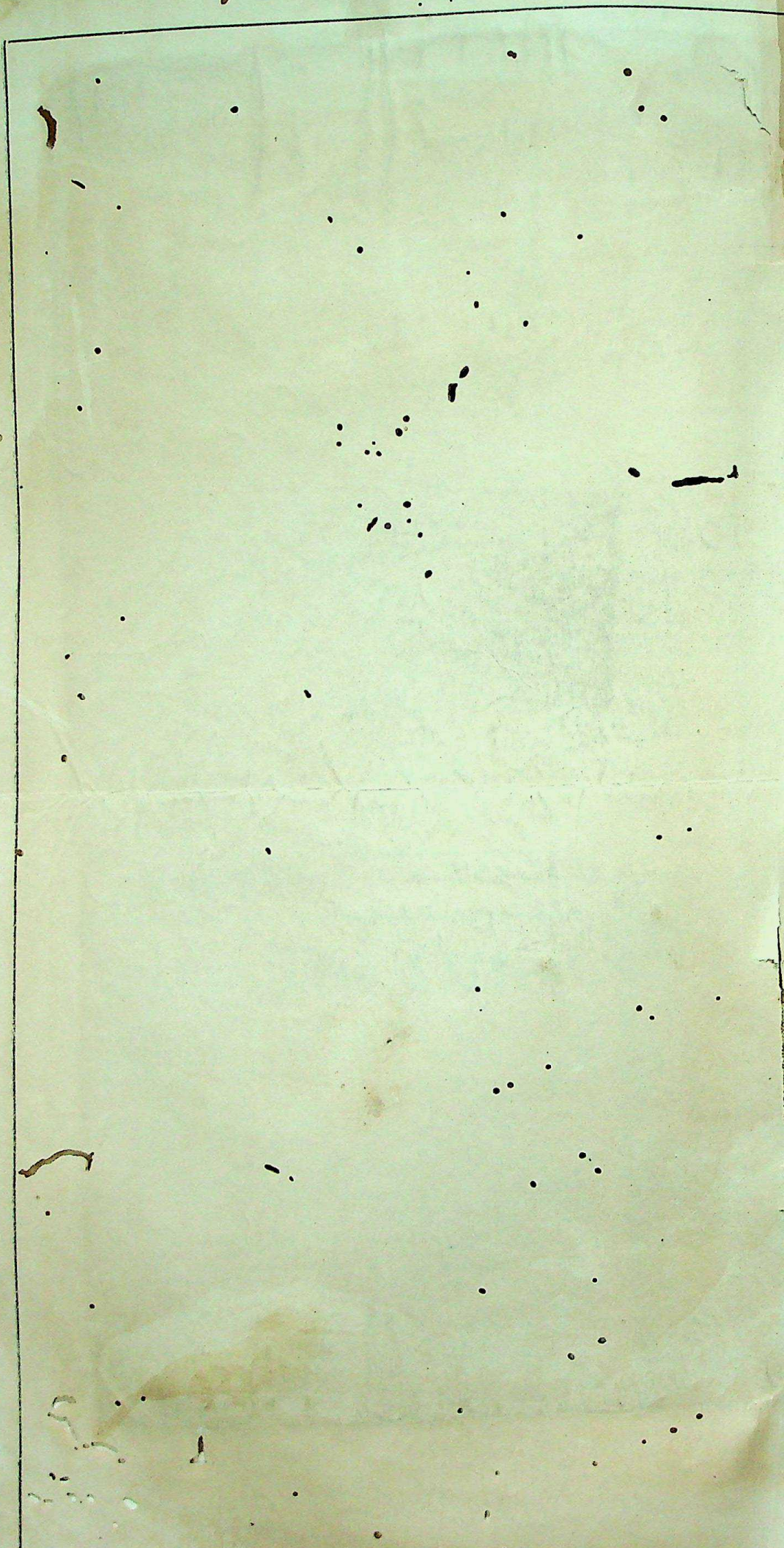
years since independence, the majority of them have been purposely kept outside the pale of literacy. They are nonetheless shrewd enough, and brave enough, already proved it, and are prepared to prove it again.

MARKS ALLOTTED
TO EACH QUESTION

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Shape Of Things To Come

MARKS ALLOTTED
TO EACH QUESTION

Politics Reduced To Muck-raking

Much will depend on whether the old-fashioned homespun moral codes — codes which laid stress on truth, integrity and honesty — could be relearned.

by Ashok Mitra

THE nation's capital, a handful in New Delhi had assumed, could be equated to the nation. To them, the tidings the results of the poll in three states in the very first week of the new year have brought might carry an ominous ring. But why should the rest of the nation worry over the shape of things to come?

The supposedly inert masses this nation consists of have been transmitting a series of messages during the past few years: they will not let themselves be taken for granted, they will not let corruption pass, they will not put up with the medieval concept of dynastic succession at the top, they will not permit New Delhi's foibles and obsessions to overwhelm their own judgements and priorities. If, following the holocaust in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, the people's verdict is now accepted with grace, and manners and mores are adjusted accordingly, the polity would gain in quality, and even the rate of economic growth is likely to accelerate. It is no ignominy to admit that this nation submerges several nationalities, and it cannot prosper if these nationalities feel imposed upon. True, the scale factor is not to be brushed aside, but, in all spheres of activity, there are diseconomies, as well as economies, of scale. As long as imagination is brought to bear to identify the thresholds where economies cease and diseconomies begin, and these thresholds are paid due respect, the nation can only gain in strength.

There is, however, a little bit more to it. No nation can survive for long if the helmship of its affairs reposes on crooks and thieves. In our case, this is precisely what has come about, largely because of the inspiration provided by Mrs. Indira Gandhi. A large segment of national politics has been reduced to muck-raking, typified by genuflections of specimens such as Mohammed Yunus. Much will therefore depend on whether it is at all possible that the old-fashioned, homespun moral codes — codes which laid stress on truth, integrity and decency — could be learned, or relearned, by those who would pretend to lead the nation. It is little use mincing words here. Sanjay Gandhi, while he was alive, was little better than the leader of a lumpen group. Yet even the President of the Republic is these days seen to murmur



Ashok Mitra

such invocations to his memory as would suggest that he was one of the greatest sons this country has ever produced. It is a sickening spectacle, and the majority of the nation have served notice that such outrages have to stop, or else...

If those currently in charge in New Delhi fail to derive the necessary lessons from recent events, if they assume that Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, as much as West Bengal and Tripura, are temporary aberrations and the show could continue with some minor adjustments in cosmetics, the people's wrath would sweep them away. The process through which this retribution works itself out might be somewhat gory here and there, there could be occasional turmoil and confusion, certain external powers might foolishly begin to consider their Indian kingdom as a life line, but the people would come through. Despite thirty-five

The supposedly inert masses this nation consists of have been transmitting a series of messages during the past few years: they will not let themselves be taken for granted, they will not let corruption pass...

years since independence, the majority of them have been purposely kept outside the pale of literacy. They are nonetheless shrewd enough and brave enough, already proved it, and are prepared to prove it again.

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A Thought for The Week

Prognostics do not always prove prophecies, — at least the wisest prophets make sure of the event first. — HORACE WALPOLE.

Predicting The Future

Only the boldest spirit will engage in predicting India's future. For difficulties abound. What is to be his time frame? Ten years, 20 years, 50 years? And what is to be the basis? Our past performance or our potentialities? How is either to be assessed? A great deal depends on one's predilection. It is as easy to draw an optimistic picture of what has been and can be achieved as to do the opposite. If, for example, food production has increased by over two and a half times, the population, too, has almost doubled. While India has become the tenth largest producer of industrial goods, the science-technology gap between it and the West (and Japan) remains distressingly wide. Similarly, if education has spread to the tiniest hamlet, its quality has greatly gone down so much so that there is hardly a university in India today which is worthy of being so described. Finally, while it is true that India has managed to remain a functioning democracy, it is equally indisputable that the supporting institutions have lost much of their old clan and dignity; it is difficult to be proud of them.

Prediction is thus a dangerous game. It is best not to engage in it. But how do we plan without engaging in this hazardous enterprise? So willy-nilly we have to play the game. Indeed, we have been in this game for over three decades, though after the first plan which incidentally had no "coherent philosophy" behind it, we have never managed to achieve the plan targets. But while the exercise has to go on and will surely go on, planning for the future is basically against our temperament. In "philosophic" terms, we believe in the adage: you look after today and tomorrow will look after itself. But basically it is a reflection of the present psychology. Unlike industry, farming cannot be a wholly controlled operation. It cannot escape the effect, for good or ill, of the vagaries of weather. At best irrigation can reduce dependence on rains. The other factors continue to operate today as in the past. This dependence on nature produces an attitude which is very different from that of an industrial worker and an office employee who function in controlled conditions. In India most of us are relatively new to both industry and office. So we bring with us the old attitude from the countryside.

This is an advantage as well as a disadvantage. As in the past, by and large we remain a long-suffering people and are, therefore, prepared to put up with a lot of injustice, hardship, inefficiency and corruption. But the same attitude helps perpetuate these ills. The malpractices have prospered precisely because we have been willing to put up with them. There is a lot of unorganised violence in our country. From time to time different individuals and groups just get fed up and blow up. But we still do not produce enough angry young men and women determined to bring down the social order. Even the ideologically committed act "soberly", even if they speak and write "rashly", because everyone, who has arrived or wishes to arrive, is looking for respectability and acceptability.

That would explain why the ballot box has come to be the best instrument of change. It does not call for excitement, open defiance of authority, personal rectitude and willingness to suffer for one's convictions. It also explains the touching faith the people display towards the press. They want someone else to fight their battles. How is one to predict the future in this strange land of ours?

We have missed the bus times, it is about time we go to it for our destination.
AR KRISHAN BAKSHI
Gangapur City

Views of the tourist regarding the Indian people were rising, especially so when he set to understand fully the culture and behaviour of the people in the various states. On the article one clearly dis- tinguishes that this tourist came to India to see the landscape and monu- ments, and did not have enough time to study the general be- haviour of the people and their life. To see India in her- ity Th. V. d. Ven will have to make a third visit to the coun- try.

h. V. d. Ven's encounter with "better educated Indians" (I do not know how capable he is of being able to classify Indians regard- ing education) was disappointing. It was on his meeting with the owner of a rural college and his behaviour that he has based his judgment of educated Indians. The author's view of women in India proves his failure to under- stand our lifestyle. Perhaps he is unaware that the type of work done by women in India is fully re- spected and accepted by the Indian people, and it is absurd to hear of a tourist stupidly asking where the hell are all the men except working in the fields, cutting wood, doing the spinning or being home mak- ing. Th. V. d. Ven seems to think that India should adapt to the Western style of living and thinking.

L. GEORGE
Ahmedabad

The Grand Parade

In his book *India in Axis Strategy*, which was reviewed by Govind Talwalkar—"Netaji and the Nazis" (October). Mr. Hauner tries to display the cordial relations that existed between Netaji and the command of the Third Reich. It seems he has based his high- minded conclusions merely on the hasty comments on Indians that the Fuehrer had made in *Kampf*. I was present at the A's grand parade in Berlin and there was no anti-Indian feeling, either in the leadership nor among the public. German professors and Indian pundits had already established the Indo-German re- lation, both ethnic and linguistic. Aryan relation, as it was known, is still cherished by many people of the older generation in many. True, some interested writers tried to equate the Hin- dus with the much wronged "Ju- ds", but this idea was at- tached not credited by the German propaganda body of the time. If Hitler hated the Hindus, as the author would like to believe, nobody else was of it.

HANSEL HAUSER
Bombay

The old war-horse is back

destiny has placed Vasantdada again at the helm of Maharashtra. To be successful he will have to bring harmony among the factions in his party.

GOING, going, going and at last gone with much reluctance and without much ceremony, Babasaheb Bhosale

at first thought of as a gap chief minister, but he proved that he was not big enough to stop the gap. The best thing he did was to resign in office for a little over five months. To be fair to him, he tried to keep the administration as clean as it was possible for a politically weak chief minister to keep it, especially after it had been fouled by his predecessor. His successor, Yashwantrao Patil, is like an old horse, always dependable. He has not been thrust on Maharashtra; he was chosen according to the "secret consensus" and unanimously adopted by the state's Congress(I) legislature.

Vasantdada has risen from the roots level — there are few of his type left today. He has lived and worked among the poor people and shared their joys and sorrows. He knows their problems, even if he does not know the answers to them. He calls to mind the unsophisticated passions of the Deccan, the craggy hills and the smells and tastes of its unluxurious plains and its rich sugarcane fields. He possesses the classic qualities of a Maratha except the spareness. Marathas today do not keep themselves fighting trim, the battle they wage now being mostly political. Vasantdada was disciplined by the school of life and is guided by an earthy instinct. Vasantdada is in many respects an ideal Congressman, one who has participated in the movement of Gandhiji and one who understands the meaning of his Gandhiji's ideals. The brashness and brazenness of the new breed of politicians are alien to him. We must remember how

this new crop of leadership has brought discredit to the organisation both in northern and peninsular India. The credibility of the Congress(I) will, to a large extent, depend not only on the performance of the Centre but on the quality of the men who head the governments of the states ruled by that party. Maharashtra being one of the more important states of the Union, Vasantdada has a very important job to do. The question is whether he can regain the mileage lost by his party in recent years.

Shaped By Adversity

Vasantdada has had to battle through life. He was orphaned when he was too small even to say "Ayi" and was looked after by his maternal uncle. Adversity helped to shape his character and further strengthened the toughness native to him as a Maratha. When boys of his age went to school with satchel slung from the shoulder and with bajra roti tucked into the dhoti, he was already a cadet in the army of freedom. He took part in the Quit India movement and was gaoled. He managed to escape and joined the rebel forces that established a free government in Satara under Yeshwantrao Chavan. It is worth noting that Chavan Saheb owes his Shivaji image in some measure to Vasantdada who can claim to be Tanaji, at any rate a Tanaji of sorts.

When India became free Vasantdada was not in the scramble for office. Instead he plunged into the co-operative movement along with Dr. D. R. Gadgil. This was the most creative period of his life. It was largely because of his leadership and talent for organisation that the once backward districts of western Maharashtra from which the peasants had found it difficult to wrest a morsel for their sustenance now flowed with sugarcane juice if not honey. It was a transformation comparable to that of the Punjab and Haryana today and accomplished without the benefit of the irrigation facilities that the latter two states possess. Will Vasantdada be able to inspire a new constructive movement that could be an example for the rest of India or will he be wasting himself in politicking?



strength to him or a source of embarrassment?

Difficult days are ahead for Vasantdada after months of ease and comfort in Delhi. They should wake the Maratha in him and give him the strength to grapple with the problems of his state.

— QUARK

tisement, conveys the sense of letting down the side.

SUNNY RAGHUNATH
New Delhi

As a fellow-foreigner I would like to comment on some common misconceptions on the part of Westerners about India—misconceptions which are in danger of being taken to heart by the Indians themselves.

What many Westerners do not seem to be able to appreciate is the fact that India has certain intractable problems which cannot be solved by waving a magic wand; and as a result these people tend to make negative judgments on the people of the country.

In northern Europe it is so easy to keep the toilet clean and put out the rubbish for the dustman, but public health bills are high as a result. In India there just isn't the money for ubiquitous sewage systems or council refuse-collection and street-cleaning schemes, but Indians are much cleaner than the English were before the advent of these conveniences—they used to take a bath once a year and throw

they themselves are cushioned from the poverty, they run the place down because of it. It irritates me despite the fact that it is the result of ignorance rather than anything else.

The idea our friend puts forward that women are not "part of the society" is particularly incongruous. The women's liberation movement has its place in industrial societies, and poses interesting questions for India. To tack it willy-nilly onto a much more matriarchal society, where the extended family is still of great importance, is to blithely disregard a number of basic social differences. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, our Dutch friend falls into the trap of supposing that the people and the country can be separated. It's the typical old colonial attitude—"the country's wonderful—the wildlife, scenery, architectural marvels—but it's a pity it has to be spoilt by all these uncivilized natives." Of course our friend would like to see an India populated by Dutchmen, but unfortunately for him this can't be arranged.

I am very fond of India. This is my fifth visit and I hope to come

variation. We have missed the bus many times. It is about time we got into it for our destination.
NAZAR KRISHAN BAKSHI
Gangapur City

THE views of the tourist regarding the Indian people were surprising, especially so when he has yet to understand fully the basic culture and behaviour of the people in the various states. On reading the article one clearly discerns that this tourist came to India to see the landscape and monuments, and did not have enough time to study the general behaviour of the people and their aims in life. To see India in her totality Th. V. d. Ven will have to make a third visit to the country.

Th. V. d. Ven's encounter with the "better educated Indians" (I do not know how capable he is of being able to classify Indians regarding education) was disappointing. It was on his meeting with the headmaster of a rural college and his behaviour that he has based his judgment of educated Indians. The author's view of women in India proves his failure to understand our lifestyle. Perhaps he is still unaware that the type of work done by women in India is fully respected and accepted by the Indian people, and it is absurd to hear of a tourist stupidly asking "Where the hell are all the women except working in the fields, cutting wood, doing the shopping or being home makers?" Th. V. d. Ven seems to think that India should adapt to the Western style of living and thinking.

L. GEORGE
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At The Grand Parade

IN his book *India In Axis Strategy*, which was reviewed by Govind Talwalkar—"Netaji among the Nazis" (Octo-10), Mr. Hauner tries to underplay the cordial relations that existed between Netaji and the high command of the Third Reich. It seems he has based his high-handed conclusions merely on the few hasty comments on Indians that the Fuehrer had made in *Mein Kampf*. I was present at the INA's grand parade in Berlin and there was no anti-Indian feeling, neither in the leadership nor among the public. German professors and Indian pundits had already established the Indo-German relation, both ethnic and linguistic. The Aryan relation, as it was known then, is still cherished by many people of the older generation in Germany. True, some interested quarters tried to equate the Hindus with the much wronged "Juden", but this idea was at least not credited by the German propaganda body of Goebbels. If Hitler hated the Hindus, as the author would like us to believe, nobody else was aware of it.

HANSEL HAUSER
Bombay



their slop—or worse—out of upstairs windows often onto unsuspecting passers-by! Many Westerners, however, regard the standard of hygiene in India as a fault in the Indian character.

The reason for so many Indians sitting around, which seems to have passed by our friend (as he glides past in his caravan) is that more often than not there is no work for them. They are not lazy, they are poor—and poverty is not a morally reprehensible quality, though it may be. Rich tourists come here for a wonderfully holiday and although

again, I see it as a leading third-world country with a horrendous population problem, caught in the poverty trap as all third-world countries are but striving bravely, and with some success, to overcome its problems.

A.J. RIDGWAY
Kodaikanal

THE article succinctly sums up our vague attitude towards work and life. We hardly pay any heed to sanitation, noise pollution—the list is endless. Ages ago our religious poet Kabir had written "Kal Kare Jo Aaj Kar" and now an outsider makes the same obser-

Letters

An Open Reply

IN "An Open Letter to Mrs. Gandhi" (Jan. 16), I feel the author has done no service to anybody and his piece perilously hovers on the border of academic abracadabra. I think he is a well-read person and this only proves how much damage books can do to a man. He has a smattering knowledge of Indian history, but has no real understanding of the history of our times. I suspect that he is suffering from the same ailment which assails and afflicts many intellectuals.

Intellectuals, in India, today are a troubled lot, trapped in their own thoughtless timidity. They are upset by the terrible turbulence around them, but lack the moral courage to act boldly. In the open letter no remedy has been suggested except telling Mrs. Gandhi the things she knows better than most of us. What she urgently needs is a consolidated plan of action to stem the rot, control the situation and bring a sense of genuine security to the people.

The unknown Indian does not realise that ancient history is not always a correct guide to modern times. The ways of kings and emperors were different from those of the democrats. Even the Indira period has got to be different from the Nehru era and she need not be tested on the Nehru anvil all the time.

Most people in the country believe that in the prevailing atmosphere only Indira can deliver the goods and take some vital steps to save the nation. But in this mighty undertaking she needs co-operation, goodwill and hard work from us all. But what she quite often gets is a shower of brickbats and poisonous propaganda against her. Will this help her to take the country forward and do what the people expect of her? Even some of her wretched partymen flatter her profusely in her presence and denounce her while her back is turned. She herself once wrote to me — "People say one thing to me and something else to others. Is it not sad?" In such conditions, we should be sympathetic to her difficulties.

About the rout of the Congress in South India most persons talk about Indira's defeat and N.T.R.'s victory, but very few refer to the deep poison of regionalism that is being spread, and which threatens India's unity. Regionalism is a very dangerous development. It must be remembered that once such an evil is allowed to flourish many evils will raise their heads and the country

may be ruined. Mrs. Gandhi, I know it well, is not distressed by the defeat in South India, but is certainly disturbed at the rise of regionalism. Let the intellectuals and people like the "Unknown Indian" meet at a conference, discuss the country's problems threadbare and suggest remedies to the Prime Minister. I am sure, she will respond to anything that is sensible and practical.

P. D. TANDON
Allahabad

MRS. Gandhi must really be envied for the number of self-appointed advisers she has in her predicament. But I wonder if she is going to take serious notice of their suggestions. Apparently, she finds her own inner voice more reliable! So, one should not be surprised if the open letter to her published in your columns fails to reform her.

It was amusing that the unknown Indian, so full of the wisdom of desperation, was not prepared to disclose his name and address. How can anyone take seriously the advice of a person who hides his moral fervour behind a thick wall of anonymity? What was he afraid of? That Mrs. Gandhi would lock him up under the National Security Act for daring to tell the plain truth? This attitude is typical of our so-called intellectuals. They are terribly frank and hard-hitting in private conversation or when no one except their cronies is listening, but do not want it to be publicly known that they are harbouring treasonable thoughts.

My suspicion is that the unknown and unsigned Indian may

not be from Pondicherry but could be from Patagonia or Palm Beach where Mrs. Gandhi can't reach him.

K. R. SUNDAR RAJAN
New Delhi

THAT the writer is not an ordinary Indian is apparent from the style of his writing. He is probably another aspirant to the membership of the group of sycophants, who he believes surround our Prime Minister at present. Or is he a hired moral booster in response to recent reverses at the hustings?

Our Prime Minister has more knowledge of Indian history than the unknown Indian thinks. His references to Ashoka, Akbar and Nehru are examples of naked sycophancy and hence in bad taste.

The fanfare with which the newspaper has splashed the open letter shows to what extent the letter can be impressed by writing that is rambling, pointless and mediocre.

J. K. SAREEN

Thane

THE open letter was a languished cry of every right-thinking person in the country. If the past trends are any guide, it is unlikely to have an impact on the present-day leadership. We can only change the overall scenario if there are people of vision and lofty ideals at the helm of the country's affairs.

V. SAGAR

New Delhi

IT is true that from the time of independence the performance of the country has been a dire reflection of the attitude, abject

The introduction of a presidential form of government is not easy either. It would need amendment of the Constitution which, even if carried out, is likely to be challenged in the Supreme Court as affecting "the basic structure of our Constitu-

Whatever may be the fate of the country is to prosper, it is essential to have an elected president and elected states who can live for five years or favour. India has courage and give country in this d-

R. K. HADGISTANCE

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The Americans have failed

The only consideration that still induces non-Europeans to keep up an attitude of apparent friendliness towards the U.S.A. is that its obsessive fear of the Soviet Union can be exploited.

Nirad C. Chaudhuri

In my last article in the *Times of India* I quoted Pascal's and illustrated its relevance to Indian politics by discussing the Hindu-Muslim question. I tried to show that the injury which was finally inflicted on India by the discord between the two communities was due largely to the stance of the nationalist leaders to face facts because they were unpleasant. Today I deal with the same kind of illusion from facts in the field of international affairs among the great powers. Let me, however, begin again, lest my readers should have forgotten it: "wrote Pascal, 'fall over the precipice after putting something before our eyes to prevent our seeing it.'"

Everance we see their pronouncements on international affairs, exponents of the leading political policies of the Western world (with one exception) seem determined to avoid all reality. If this were done out of one would say that it is a stupid kind of hypocrisy, and truth-hypocrisy which defeats its purpose by deceiving, not others, but themselves. There has never been anything in the history of diplomacy which is in itself a thing, because it is in the very word secretary being derived from the word "secret." All this frankness one finds in the following facts of international politics today:

Government or country which has had the courage to make use of war or deployment of military forces as an instrument of policy, and also had the resolution, and efficiency to conduct it successfully, has gained its objective and profited.

As It Is, a country which has looked to the U.N. for succour and protection has been ruined. The editor or government which has listened to the flattering advice of the United States has been equalled.

I held opinion whether for injured country or against aggressor has not made the difference to either. I am not called upon to give examples to substantiate my positions. If any reader is not able to do his own knowledge he

reveals as the in-firmest basis of policy ever since the notion of *Raison d'Etat* came into being. Its basis on the recognition of the omnipotence of the selective entity which recognises any master but at the same time its criterion of action

should not go further in his perusal of it.

These are, however, only the most important among the realities of world politics today which the illusionists who dominate its discussion, regard as unpleasant and therefore unmentionable. There are scores of others. Just to rub in the argument, it has been estimated that since 1945 there have been more than 140 wars outside Europe, in which ten million people may have been killed. In addition, in many countries there have been massacres of hundreds of thousands without war. But while everywhere today one hears a strident condemnation of the extinct *Par Europeana*, there is no reference to these consequences of its disappearance.

What is even more strange, in fact bizarre, is that the realities of international relations are not only ignored, but to all appearance deliberately suppressed. A stream of words is flowing out of the mouths of Western statesmen to hide all reality. Even that effete and contemptible organisation, the U.N., is being shown a respect which it has never earned. Indeed, even those who pursue their policies in the light of national interests alone, always want to get its approval. The U.N. has become something like the censor's office of the Vatican, it has either to pronounce *nil obstat* to every international action or put it on the index. Neither, of course, mean anything. Thus, the relationship between the real course of international developments and their discussion today may be summed up in the old proverb: dogs bark, but the caravan marches.

Flight From Reality

Now, the worst offender in respect of this flight from reality is the very power which has the capacity to deal with any international situation that can arise, however menacing it might seem to be. Of course, that power is the United States. But it has become, in spite of its irresistible material strength, a country which cannot guard even its own interests and honour. Every American president, every American secretary of state, and the American state department exhibit a lack of capacity to see international situations for what they are which is astounding, and they have failed to give their country a stable and continuous foreign policy. The Congress on its part does

in the light of *Raison d'Etat*, and with combined adventurousness and circumspection. This, however, is only the latest phase of Russian foreign policy which has been consistent from Ivan the Terrible to Stalin the terrible, with Peter the Great and the other Czars in-between. The communist leaders of Russia have been the same Czars, if only oligarchy. Even a German princess as Czar-

everything in its power to make it more unreal and vacillating. Above all, the American press flourishes on its failures and ditherings because these enable it to satisfy the cravings of its readers for sensations. All this has not only injured the United States, but inflicted immeasurable suffering on the rest of the world.

I give only two examples. The United States was not called upon to intervene in Indo-China after the French left the country but it did so on the spur of the moment without considering its implications, and then executed the policy so half-heartedly, that its failure was inevitable. This also made the war one of the most cruel known in history. The failure has brought humiliation to the United States and caused untold misery to the people in whose favour the intervention was undertaken.

Secondly, the United States has given extensive military and economic support to privileged and unpopular autocratic or oligarchic regimes out of its obsessive fear of communism, but when it has found that its clients had no internal support it has abandoned them in the most opportunistic manner. It has also humiliated and thwarted its indispensable European allies in order to appease unappeasable non-Europeans. In respect of loyalty to allies the constancy shown by the United States has surpassed the record of even American marriages. To make no bones about it, no country in history has had such a record of betraying allies and friends.

Perfidy Foiled

The only country which has succeeded in foiling the American disposition to perfidy is Israel. Of course, it also would have been betrayed if the American administration had full freedom to indulge its penchant for tacking and veering to every wind in its foreign policy. But two factors in the relationship have prevented this. First, there are powerful elements in the American electorate which will not suffer Israel to be harmed; and secondly, which is certainly the more important reason, Israel herself, in spite of being dependent on the U.S.A. for her existence to a greater degree than any other protegee has always had the courage to refuse to change its policies or refrain from action at the dictation of the U.S.A., when she has thought that would risk her security. She has shown that in order not to be betrayed like South Vietnam by the U.S.A., a country has to be like a ruthless demimondaine who can check the lecherous inconstancies of an immensely wealthy lover. In fact, Israel has been the Maria Callas whom old Onassis could not abandon. But Israel's position vis-à-vis the U.S.A. is also very special.

Thus a balance-sheet of American foreign policy drawn up today would show a debit which is

whimsical self-indulgence, and that too of the lowest and cruelest kind. Therefore, it is bound to be opposed to any line of foreign policy which might threaten the self-indulgence.

This is making the American administration turn more and more from the human to the material element for its foreign policy. It is almost wholly relying upon the weaponry it has, which

in utter contrast to the country's real power. But that power has been completely ineffectual in maintaining the position and reputation of the U.S.A. in the world. In the non-European world more especially, all friendliness and respect for it has virtually disappeared, and that is not unreasonable, for every non-European nation which has depended upon the U.S.A. had had to say to the American government: "What is sport to you is death to us." The only consideration that still induces non-Europeans to keep up an attitude of apparent friendliness towards the U.S.A. is that its obsessive fear of the Soviet Union can be exploited. All of them have discovered that a gesture of hatred towards the United States is more effective than a gesture of friendship.

All this exposes an appalling failure of American foreign policy, and the consequences of this failure as I have already said, are not simply negative. It has harmed both the United States and its dependents and allies.

Politics, whether national or international, cannot run without power and today only the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. have the power to cope with the world situation as it is. But while the U.S.A. cannot use its power wisely and in time, it is only the power of the Soviet Union, which I regard as Russian power, which is playing effectually on that situation. Since 1947, Russia has stolen a march on the United States in every move in international politics.

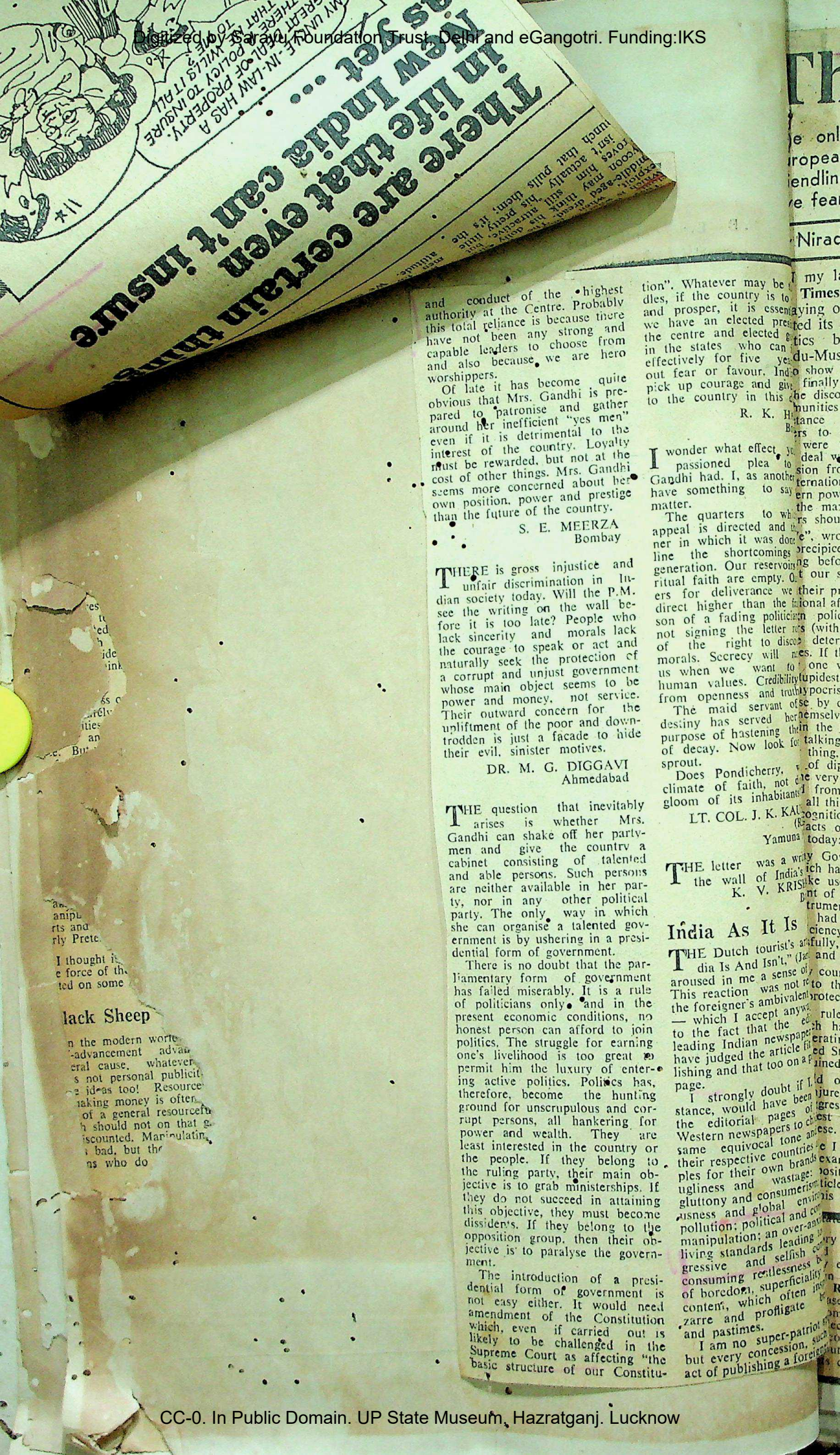
This has to be explained, and the explanation is obvious. Foreign policy of the United States fails because it has to conform to the principles of American domestic politics, that is to say, it has to be democratic. This ideal was first clearly defined by President Wilson in the first of his famous fourteen points, which ran as follows:

"Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understanding of any kind, but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view."

But to proceed in public view is also to be subject to public approval, and so, what was implied was that foreign policy would be a replica of what according to Lincoln was American internal government: namely, foreign policy of the people, by the people, and for the people. In other words, this was to subject foreign policy to the omnipotence of the majority which inexorably passed into the tyranny of the majority, which long ago Tocqueville distinguished not only as the basic element in American politics but also as the greatest danger to the American State. This has been fully proved in American foreign policy.

A democratic majority is the last authority to which the foreign policy of any country can be sub-

when for them wars will also become a means of self-indulgence, that is to say, when they will be roused to hatred and berserk fury by some intolerable humiliation and danger like Pen-Harbour and seek revenge. Woe betide those who will then be in the anti-American camp! Those who are disposed to look upon the United States as a bruised reed to lean on, should keep that in mind.



There are certain things in life that even can't insure

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and conduct of the highest authority at the Centre. Probably this total reliance is because there have not been any strong and capable leaders to choose from and also because we are hero worshippers.

Of late it has become quite obvious that Mrs. Gandhi is prepared to patronise and gather around her inefficient "yes men" even if it is detrimental to the interest of the country. Loyalty must be rewarded, but not at the cost of other things. Mrs. Gandhi seems more concerned about her own position, power and prestige than the future of the country.

S. E. MEERZA
Bombay

THERE is gross injustice and unfair discrimination in Indian society today. Will the P.M. see the writing on the wall before it is too late? People who lack sincerity and morals lack the courage to speak or act and naturally seek the protection of a corrupt and unjust government whose main object seems to be power and money, not service. Their outward concern for the upliftment of the poor and down-trodden is just a facade to hide their evil, sinister motives.

DR. M. G. DIGGAVI
Ahmedabad

THE question that inevitably arises is whether Mrs. Gandhi can shake off her party-men and give the country a cabinet consisting of talented and able persons. Such persons are neither available in her party, nor in any other political party. The only way in which she can organise a talented government is by ushering in a presidential form of government.

There is no doubt that the parliamentary form of government has failed miserably. It is a rule of politicians only, and in the present economic conditions, no honest person can afford to join politics. The struggle for earning one's livelihood is too great to permit him the luxury of entering active politics. Politics has, therefore, become the hunting ground for unscrupulous and corrupt persons, all hankering for power and wealth. They are least interested in the country or the people. If they belong to the ruling party, their main objective is to grab ministries. If they do not succeed in attaining this objective, they must become dissidents. If they belong to the opposition group, then their objective is to paralyse the government.

The introduction of a presidential form of government is not easy either. It would need amendment of the Constitution which, even if carried out is likely to be challenged in the Supreme Court as affecting "the basic structure of our Constitu-

tion". Whatever may be the result, if the country is to prosper, it is essential that we have an elected government at the centre and elected governments in the states who can effectively for five years out fear or favour. Indians should pick up courage and give a finality to the country in this direction.

R. K. H. B.

I wonder what effect Mrs. Gandhi had. I, as another, have something to say on the matter.

The quarters to which appeal is directed and the manner in which it was done, line the shortcomings of the generation. Our reservoirs of ritual faith are empty. Our prayers for deliverance are direct higher than the rational of a fading politician, not signing the letter of the right to disclose morals. Secrecy will not help us when we want to one human values. Credibility from openness and truthfulness. The maid servant of the purpose of hastening the of decay. Now look for sprout.

Does Pondicherry, climate of faith, not be gloom of its inhabitants?

LT. COL. J. K. K.

THE letter was a way the wall of India's K. V. KRISHNA

India As It Is

THE Dutch tourist's "India Is and Isn't" (Jan. 1955) aroused in me a sense of This reaction was not to the foreigner's ambivalent — which I accept any to the fact that the leading Indian newspaper have judged the article lishing and that too on a page.

I strongly doubt if I stance, would have been the editorial pages of Western newspapers to the same equivocal tone as their respective countries. I plies for their own brands ugliness and wastage; gluttony and consumerism; pollution; political and manipulation; an over-living standards leading to aggressive and selfish consuming restlessness of boredom, superficiality content, which often is zarre and profligate and pastimes.

I am no super-patriot but every concession, such act of publishing a foreign

MI-5 At Work In BBC

I—A Story Of Fanciful Charges

By DAVID LEIGH AND PAUL SASHMAR

ONLY a year after he had graduated from his Art College in London, John Goldschmidt, a bright, young film director, was asked to make a film for the BBC *Omnibus* series. Goldschmidt could not believe his luck. The year was 1969 and the film was to be about the occupation by students of the Hornsey Art College.

One day during filming he discovered that police had been checking the details of a car he had hired and had also been watching his house. Soon after, without warning, the BBC cancelled Goldschmidt's film on Hornsey without explanation.

Two years later the BBC once again asked him to make a film—this time a *Play For Today* about school-leavers based on an existing script. He was installed in an office in television centre and set about his business. Once again he was stopped from working. An embarrassed executive told him: "You're not supposed to be allowed to work here".

Major Row

A major row erupted in the BBC drama department about Goldschmidt's treatment and the truth of his double sacking was revealed. He had been blacklisted by a BBC 'personnel officer' working with MI-5. Goldschmidt's 'offence' was to have taken part in an exchange of students between his art college and a Czech film, spending a few weeks in Czechoslovakia. He was not, nor ever had been, a communist.

After an outraged deputation went to see Huw Wheldon, at that time managing director, television, the banning was eventually lifted. But Goldschmidt was by no means the only victim of the BBC's secret blacklisting system. *The Observer* has compiled detailed evidence of how the BBC vetting system, backed by 15, has barred individuals from employment by the BBC or stopped their advancement in the organisation. In each case the victims were oblivious of their place on the blacklist—and therefore unable to challenge the often untrue or fanciful evidence against them. The man currently in charge of MI-5 vetting is brigadier Ronnie Stonham, formerly of the signals regiment, operating from room 105 on the first floor of Broadcasting House.

In 1965 the distinguished documentary director Stephen Peet was prevented by MI-5 from being awarded a BBC staff job. Two BBC executives, Stuart Hood, BBC controller of programmes 1961-64, and Hallam Tennyson, a BBC careers office at the time disclosed how the MI-5 operated in Peet's case.

Peet's brother John was a communist. In 1950, 15 years before Peet's application for a BBC job was considered, his brother had caused a sensation in Reuters by leaving his job as their West Berlin correspondent and moving to East Germany, where he still lives.

Stephen Peet was neither a communist nor politically active, in any way. MI-5's only assertion was that he maintained links with his brother and sometimes met him. Peet was persistently turned down for full-time BBC jobs. All he was told by the BBC was that he had failed to be accepted. After some time, sympathetic executives tipped him off that he was being blacklisted.

He appealed to his MP, Kenneth

Robinson, at that time a minister in the Wilson government. Robinson remembers: "I went to see a minister—I think it was the home secretary—and I made representations on Peet's behalf". This approach worked. The blacklisting disappeared as mysteriously as it had arrived. Peet went on, within the BBC, to make the much-acclaimed *Yesterday's Witness* series and to win a Royal Television Society special award.

With the international flowering of the "new left" and student activism at the end of the sixties, MI5 detected ever wider potential conspiracies within the BBC. All the young graduate general trainees had their names passed on to Curzon Street, although there was little to help them on the files. John Laird, responsible for graduate recruitment, remembers one particular graduate's case: "They said his father, who had left Hungary in 1956, was suspect. I had to write a letter saying we had not chosen him, although in fact we had".

It was at about this time that John Goldschmidt was hired—then vetoed by MI5. After his 'rehabilitation' by Wheldon he made no complaint and went on to a solid career as a film director.

But at about the same time that Goldschmidt had been cleared, one of the BBC's brightest graduate trainees Michael Rosen, known as an Oxford student activist, was blacklisted by MI5. Rosen had caused ripples during his BBC training by making a radio documentary about the French Marxist, Régis Debray, and the US embassy in Grosvenor Square had complained about another Rosen project which used film clips of US soldiers being tested with the drug LSD.

Security Risk

In 1972, Rosen was sacked. He was told that no department was prepared to offer him a job. This was quite untrue. John Laird says: "I was called by the chairman of one board, who said 'You'll be glad to know we've appointed Rosen'. Then he called again, embarrassed, and said it had been 'blocked'".

Rosen had made no secret of his political attitudes when he was originally appointed, telling the board he had Marxist views. He had a subsequent successful career as a writer of plays and children's books.

By the mid-seventies the categories of staff vetted were growing wider and so were the definitions of subversion. In 1975, a 29-year-old assistant film editor in Wales, Paul Turner, was becoming increasingly depressed at his repeated rejection for jobs.

Last week, a senior executive who sat on one of his interview boards told us why: "He was applying for a six-month attachment with the community programmes unit. He was interviewed, but as soon as he left the room, the appointments officer said there'd been a mistake. His file had a Christmas tree (meaning a security file was held) and he should not have even been allowed an interview. He was a 'security risk' because of something to do with Welsh nationalism."

Turner's reaction when he told him he had been blacklisted 10 years ago was immense relief. "I feel I want to go out and celebrate. For years I'd worried my career at BBC never

blossomed because I was somehow second-rates".

Turner's blacklisting—he now helps run a successful independent production company in Wales, Telisys—is easy to explain. As a young man, he joined the Welsh Communist Party for two years, he was an active shop steward and attended two world festivals of youth, in Berlin and Cuba.

The following year, MI5 attempted to blacklist Isabel Hilton from a job as a TV reporter in Scotland. Their secret allegations were, as it turns out, completely false.

By chance, the then controller of BBC Scotland, Alastair Hetherington, former editor of *The Guardian* knew her personally. Last week, when we put Ms Hilton's name to him, he confirmed the case.

"I refused to accept it. It was inconceivable. There was obviously some mistake. As a result of my protests, eventually a personnel man came up from London and said she was an organiser of a pro-Chinese group—SACU, the Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding."

It was a clerical error. She was a Chinese linguist and had agreed to act as secretary to a completely different academic body based in the Chinese department at Edinburgh university, SCA, the Scottish-China Association.

Ms Hilton, having despaired of delays lasting weeks described by the BBC as 'administrative referral to London' decided to leave Scotland and accepted a job elsewhere. She is now a journalist of the *Sunday Times*.

She was shocked when we told her last week why she had been denied the Scottish job: "I suppose what those people did changed my life without me ever knowing". She was lucky—had Hetherington not discovered the mistake and followed it up, she would have been permanently blacklisted—and kept in ignorance of it.

Things did not work out as happily for Yvette Vanson. In 1979 she was considered of sufficient talent and integrity to be hired to help make *Access* films in the BBC's community programmes unit. But days before she was to start, an embarrassed executive told her the job had been withdrawn.

Mistake Discovered

In a series of letters now held by *The Observer*, the BBC wrote telling her that "the job should have gone to an internal candidate." She was told she could apply for other jobs and offered £500 for her "inconvenience".

We traced one of the senior officials concerned who admits that the BBC had been telling lies. She had been blacklisted by MI-5 as "an organiser of the workers revolutionary party." Indeed, she had been a member of the WRP when, five years earlier, she was an actress. Although she had subsequently left the party, she made no bones about her left wing opinions.

"The blacklisting is intended to be permanent. Last year, 10 years since Yvette Vanson stopped being a member of any political group, another BBC producer wished to hire her. An executive personnel said 'but wasn't she in the WRP?' "This time there were protests, the blacklisting was withdrawn and she has successfully worked for the BBC (*The Observer*, London).

(To Be Concluded)

Story Of The T

The arrival of the editor was a daily triumph. Three messengers were generally involved; the first stood outside to signal the approach of the editorial Rolls, the second opened the front door and the third rang down the lift. The commissioner, who had earlier inspected our shoes and haircuts, ejaculated "Morning, Sir!" and saluted smartly.

by Louis Heren

THE Times may be the top people's newspaper, but some of its own top people were hardly out of the top drawer. Thomas Barnes was a great editor, but he appalled the proprietor, the son of a failed coal merchant, by eating tripe, swigging gin at his desk and living with another man's wife. She was also thought to be vulgar.

Henri Stefan de Blowitz was possibly the greatest diplomatic correspondent in newspaper history. He knew everybody in Europe from Thiers to Bismarck, who willingly lighted his cigars, but was detested as a vain little upstart from Bohemia. He was also a womaniser who got much of his information from the wives of European statesmen.

Sir William Haley was director-general of the BBC before becoming one of the paper's better editors, but he began as a Times telephonist and married one of the secretaries. Claud Cockburn was a brilliant Times foreign correspondent in Germany and America, but left to join the old Daily Worker.

One deputy editor started on the paper as a messenger. His mother, who knew where the money was, wanted him to be a printer like his father, but the son of a dead printer had no clout. The apprenticeships went to sons of live printers, and he became a reporter, foreign correspondent, war correspondent, foreign editor and eventually deputy editor. I was that Cockney lad.

I doubt if my initial view of The Times from below stairs gave me any special insights, but I worked for the paper, man and boy, for nearly 50 years. During much of that time the history of the paper reflected the decline of the country. To quote Dean Acheson, Britain lost an empire and failed to find a role. That neatly summed up the condition of the paper I knew.

The empire was still a going concern in the mid-Thirties, and the editor, Geoffrey Dawson, saw himself as its guardian. He had been a member of Milner's kindergarten in South Africa, an experience which converted him to imperialism. This explained his appeasement policy.

Dawson spoke no European language, and the Continent, with its squabbling foreigners, was an annoying distraction. Presumably he had some regrets when he told the Czechs down the river, but Czechoslovakia was a far-away country of no interest to Dominion governments.

Dawson was a power in the land, in part because he had established the principle of editorial independence. He, and not the proprietors, decided what went into the paper. He was The Times. John Walter IV, the co-chief proprietor, was ignored when he protested against appeasement.

Through Back Door

The chief proprietor, John Walter IV, was a very wealthy man with a house in Carlton House Terrace.

panel said that messengers must not use the lift except when accompanying visitors. It was also very slow, and we watched as the editor slowly disappeared from view, no doubt to feed Hitler with another piece of Europe or to plan the abdication of Edward VIII.

Britain was then a deferential society, and this was reflected inside Printing House Square. The senior editorial men worked in book-lined rooms with handsome fireplaces. In winter an elderly messenger replenished the coals from a polished brass scuttle. He had a knack of raking ashes without making a noise. The senior men sat at large desks, and I cannot remember any of them using a typewriter.

The reporters' room looked like a sweat shop. Instead of desks, it had three or four benches made by the company carpenter, and not enough telephones or typewriters. The difference between the gentlemen and players was obvious, but the entire building was imbued with civility. We were all known as "companions" — the euphemism for employees — of The Times.

Pride was no less pervasive, and was shared by the printers. They also believed that they were helping to produce the world's greatest newspaper, and it showed in their work. Printing errors were almost unknown, and editions were rarely, if ever, late.

Henri Stefan de Blowitz was possibly the greatest diplomatic correspondent in newspaper history. He knew everybody in Europe from Thiers to Bismarck, who willingly lighted his cigars, but was detested as a vain little upstart from Bohemia. He was also a womaniser who got much of his information from the wives of European statesmen.

The proof-readers were superior in more ways than one. They always wore black ties at their annual chapel dinners, and were better educated than most. In those days the paper was peppered with Latin and Greek tags, and one night I went into the room of a leader writer and found him discussing a Greek quotation with the head reader. If I had not known the reader, I could have mistaken him for another leader writer—such was his scholarship.

The editorial department's sense of purpose was later articulated by Stanley Morison, the paper's typographer, first historian and editor of the TLS: "The existence of a competent governing class is rightly said to be absolutely dependent upon The Times because no other newspaper attempts to rival it in self-respect, impartiality, independence, range of significant news, and the capacity to reason upon the matter printed." In other words, the paper saw itself as the mainstay of the ruling elite.

Whether this should have been

mistaken for a Nonconformist doctor of divinity with pacifist leanings.

He could not forget the horrors of Flanders, and was willing to pay almost any price, to save the coming generation from the fate that had overtaken his; which explained why he was an appeaser. I remember him as an intense but kindly man with dark eyes made brilliant by the pale skin and domed forehead. When I came back from the war, he accepted the advice of Donald Tyerman, who was one of the assistant editors, and made me a foreign correspondent.

What I did not know at the time was that with memories of unemployment and widespread deprivation after his war, and conscious of the mood of the country, he was determined to use The Times to make Britain a different and better land. I am guessing now, but my elevation from player to gentleman was a facet of that. He wanted to be decent to the chaps.

He accepted the social revolution triggered by Beveridge and led by the Labour Government, and recognised Britain's diminished role as a world power. He was apprehensive of the Soviet Union as one of the new superpowers, but hoped that it could be encouraged to help maintain the peace.

Barrington-Ward's left-of-centre policies angered Conservative leaders, including Churchill, and the paper became known as "the Fourpenny Pravda." He probably did not mind being condemned as a traitor to his class, but a conflict developed within the office between the old guard determined to maintain the paper's elitist character and those who wanted to respond to the changing world outside.

It was troubling. Even editors with absolute authority prefer to carry their senior colleagues with them. He was also exhausted. The job of producing a daily newspaper with a depleted staff during the war years in a badly bombed building had

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After The Shah Bano Judgment— I

By VASUDHA DHAGAMWAR

ANEESSA BEGUM is a young Bihari woman in her late twenties. She and her husband come from a village in Hazaribagh district. They have been living in a slum in Dhanbad for the last ten years. They have three children—one girl and two boys. Her husband Sayeed is a rickshaw puller. She works as a domestic servant. Their jhuggi colony is full of such couples of all castes and three religions: Hindu, Muslim and Christian. Unlike most of her neighbours however, Aneesa sends all her children to school because she wants them to have a better life than she had had. She has never heard of anything outside her little life in Dhanbad and Hazaribagh.

Aneesa works for my parents. When the controversy fanned by Shah Bano case was beginning to reach hysterical proportions I told Aneesa about Shah Bano, her circumstances, her husband's refusal to give her maintenance, the Supreme Court's judgement and the objections of Maulavis and some Muslim leaders who said that the judgement was against Islam. I also told her that some Muslims were saying that whatever happened they would not pay maintenance to a divorced wife beyond *iddat*.

Aneesa reacted sharply. She said "Kaise nahin denge? Parvati ko milega humko nahin milega? Kaise ho sakta hai? Desh mein koi kanoon hai ya nahin?"

—How won't they give it? Parvati will get it and I won't? How can this be? Is there no law in the country?

Typical of her class, Aneesa has the gift of going to the heart of the matter. So while we, the educated people are in the danger of generalising Shah Bano and her plight, Aneesa sticks to the basics. What will happen to her if Sayeed divorces her? Why should she not be treated like Parvati, her friend and neighbour?

It is an open secret that the Muslim fundamentalists have pressurised Shah Bano. No one expects Shah Bano Begum to know about Article 44 of the Constitution and its direction to the state to bring about a uniform civil code. No one expects her to know the contents of Section 125 of the Criminal Procedures Code, which she told the press, should not apply to Muslim women. If only they had made the old lady say with convincing inaccuracy that the Supreme Court should withdraw its verdict in her favour!

Bhagalpur Blindings

The fundamentalists have also succeeded in stopping the Talaq Mukti Morcha in Maharashtra, at least for the time being, by simply stoning it. The Maharashtra government has co-operated and virtually banned the Morcha in the name of 'law and order'.

Muslim fundamentalist leadership has also tried to silence non-Muslims who may side with Shah Bano or the liberal Muslims, several arguments are used to achieve this end.

One argument is that the national leaders had promised not to interfere in the personal law of minorities unless the latter requested it. The second argument is that such inter-

women get maintenance. Anyone who makes the kind of threatening noises and gestures that the fundamentalist leaders and their cohorts have been making from public platforms and in street violence is certainly not suffering from insecurity.

Besides I am not at all sure that it is always a bad thing to feel insecure. Just consider,

1. After the Bhagalpur blindings were exposed, policemen of Bhagalpur began to feel insecure. The then chief minister of Bihar, Jagannath Misra, even criticised the press and the court for demoralising the police.

2. Carpet manufacturers and brick kiln operators feel insecure because of labour laws that protect their employees and have repeatedly asked to be exempted from their operation...

There is no intrinsic merit in making everyone feel secure, regardless of why they feel insecure. In the present case Muslim men are allegedly feeling insecure because a few divorcees want to be made secure against total destitution! Let us face it, the whole outcry that has gone up against grant of maintenance to Muslim divorcees is aimed at keeping Muslim women down. Hindu men were probably just as disturbed by the revolution in Hindu law wrought by statutory changes during mid-fifties. But Hindu religion being what it is, i.e. non-*kitab*i and amorphous, and also since it was the religion of the majority, Hindu men could not raise the cry of religion in danger. The Muslim fundamentalists have that tactical advantage and they are using it. It is a shame that many of us have been unable to see through these tactics, which is why women activists are not taking as bold a stand as they should on this issue.

Profound Disregard

Mr Shahabuddin, the most sophisticated and plausible of the fundamentalists, maintains that under Islamic law re-marriage of a divorcee is allowed and that is why no maintenance is necessary. He admits that in fact re-marriage is no longer socially accepted amongst Muslims and he advocates a need for change in attitudes. But his solution contains a profound disregard for woman as human beings. Does every woman want to be married off the day after the *iddat* period ends? Indeed, a bad marriage may make a woman decide against re-marriage altogether and a woman with children may prefer to remain unmarried rather than lose their custody. It is also argued that Islam has provided for the maintenance beyond *iddat*. The woman's blood relatives must take care of her. Failing them the state must provide for her. This argument predictably brings forth very sharp retorts about the nature of the Indian state which is secular, rather than theocratic, leave alone Islamic. In the meanwhile something basic is forgotten! The state in India has provided for the destitute divorcee. That is precisely what Section 125 of the Criminal Procedures Code is about.

(To Be Concluded)

Judgment— I

By VASUDHA DHAGAMWAR

ANEESSA BEGUM is a young Bihari woman in her late twenties. She and her husband come from a village in Hazaribagh district. They have been living in a slum in Dhanbad for the last ten years. They have three children—one girl and two boys. Her husband Sayeed is a rickshaw puller. She works as a domestic servant. Their jhuggi colony is full of such couples of all castes and three religions: Hindu, Muslim and Christian. Unlike most of her neighbours however, Anessa sends all her children to school because she will make the minorities feel insecure. Lastly, the non-Muslims are accused of being communal and of shedding crocodile tears for Muslim women!

Any reference by a person who happens to be a Hindu to the secular nature of our Constitution—is immediately and deliberately misconstrued as a threat to the Muslims' right to stay here. But it is conveniently forgotten that the right came into existence because at the time of partition and after much debate Indian leaders wisely opted for a secular India rather than a Hindu India.

One is getting fed up with all this nonsense. It has long ceased to be entertaining and has in fact become quite insulting to anyone with a modicum of sense, intelligence and respect for the Constitution. It is also quite dangerous to the communal harmony of the country. Our national leaders may have promised, at the time of partition, not to interfere with the personal law of minorities. But even they did not say that only men and at that only religious fundamentalist leaders could be allowed to ask for changes in their personal law.

Muslim women form 51 per cent of the Muslim population in India, when they approach the courts for maintenance they are tacitly asking for such interference for a change in their personal law. They have as much right to make this demand as men. They are Muslims and in the eyes of the Constitution they are equals of men.

The second argument is that Muslims will feel insecure if their

women get maintenance. Anyone who makes the kind of threatening noises and gestures that the fundamentalist leaders and their cohorts have been making from public platforms and in street violence is certainly not suffering from insecurity.

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Americans feel helpless against terrorism

NEW YORK, February 9 (AP): Americans feel helpless in the face of international terrorism and want the government to do more to fight it, but are unsure that military action would help, according to a poll published today.

Fifty-two per cent of the 1,581 adults telephoned in a New York Times-CBS news poll believed there is nothing individuals can do to protect themselves from terrorists and 57 per cent of the respondents said they were so concerned about the dangers of terrorism that they did not want friends to travel abroad.

Only 38 per cent said the United States was doing enough to protect Americans and 55 per cent thought more could be done.

But there was no consensus on how to reduce terrorist attacks. Most suggested tighter security, retaliation and punishment rather than attempting to satisfy the demands of groups behind the violence.

There was limited support for military force as a government policy aimed at countries training and financing terrorists. More respondents, 46 per cent to 49 per cent, thought force would worsen terrorism rather than reduce it.

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ference in marriage is no longer socially accepted amongst Muslims and he advocates a need for change in attitudes. But his solution contains a profound disregard for woman as human beings. Does every woman want to be married off the day after the *iddat* period ends? Indeed, a bad marriage may make a woman decide against re-marriage altogether and a woman with children may prefer to remain unmarried rather than lose their custody. It is also argued that Islam has provided for the maintenance beyond *iddat*. The woman's blood relatives must take care of her. Failing them the state must provide for her. This argument predictably brings forth very sharp retorts about the nature of the Indian state which is secular, rather than theocratic, leave alone Islamic. In the meanwhile something basic is forgotten! The state in India has provided for the destitute divorcee. That is precisely what Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code is about.

(To Be Concluded)

After The Shah Bano Judgement — II

SECULARISM is being interpreted in a way which supports the status quo in the minorities, however unfair and reactionary the status quo may be. The proof of secularism of Hindus that is demanded by many Muslims leaders makes one feel sometimes that nothing short of abjuration of Hindu religion by its followers will satisfy them. And Hinduism is seen everywhere — in names, in greetings, in the language used and in the laws that prevail. Anything perceived as un-Islamic is regarded not as secular but Hindu. Alas, how can 85 per cent of the population be wished away? And why should it be? And all so that the reactionary section of one minority may retain their anti-women practices?

Since the seventies when public opinion was first solicited on the Indian Adoption Bill, the fundamentalist Muslim leadership has been determined to erode the secular nature of our laws. While there are some half a dozen statutes which apply to all Indians in respect of personal law, such as the Indian Succession Act, Child Marriages Restraint Act, Guardians and Wards Act, Indian Majority Act and lastly, Special Marriage Act, which did not 'threaten' the Muslims, suddenly, the adoption bill did.

A handful of reactionary persons, claiming to speak on behalf of a minority of 11 per cent managed to thwart the will of the remaining 89 per cent, a situation for which the government of India is as much, perhaps more, to blame.

Nellie Disaster

The Congress Party must shoulder the majority portion of the blame for having communalised our politics. Ever since independence, the Congress Party has secured Muslim votes by pushing the Muslims out of the mainstream, by reducing them to being nothing but Muslims. The strategy has been simple. The majority (and this includes other non-Muslim minorities) have been aggravated by having their just demands branded communal. As part of the same strategy, the Congress Party has also accorded recognition to fundamentalists as the sole spokesmen of their community and has refused to recognise the claims of liberal Muslims to speak for their community. In turn, the Hindus have increasingly perceived Muslims as only Muslims, a situation calculated to make that community feel painfully insecure.

To take an example: it is an open secret that a steady and large scale influx of East Pakistani (later Bangladeshi) Muslims was engineered by a prominent Assamese Muslim Congressman who needed the vote banks. When the majority began to object to this invasion the said Congressman could project himself as the saviour of the immigrants and count on their votes. The Assamese objected to this migration as well as to the migration of Bangladeshi Hindus, into their state. A question that centred round the logic of nation-state with the corollaries of boundaries, citizenship and right of residence, was rapidly communalised. Instead of being seen as a question of illegal and secret migration it was deliberately played up as a question of Hindus (Assamese and immigrant) Vs. Muslims (Assamese and immigrant). The present election campaign in Assam has been conducted on precisely these lines. The CPM government of West Bengal has been adding its own fuel to the diabolical fires by standing up for all Bengali-speaking people whether or not Indian in origin. Even after the unspeakable disaster of Nellie no one stopped to ask

why tribals who generally fear non-tribals more than they fear tigers, should have gone beating themselves against the British used to ask, albeit after using a heavy hand against them. After Nellie, in only one of two newsreports was it at all whispered that the tribals had been enraged by the fact that some of their children had been deliberately killed by the neighbouring villagers and that was why the tribals went on rampage in that very area. Since one of the parties involved was Muslim, no investigation was done at all. It was just their luck that the attackers were yet another minority i.e. scheduled tribes. That is why the tribals escaped being vilified.

Minorities are the sacred cows of Indian politics. One may not speak against them, but one can drive them to a slow but certain death. Two such sacred cows confronted each other at Nellie and the cow worshippers were left without their automatic patter.

Over the issue of maintenance the fundamentalist Muslim leaders are exploiting the religious sentiments of those they lead by declaring that their religion is in danger. But is religion so fragile and so brittle? The danger to communal harmony is increased by such irrational, illogical claims. Like everything else communal harmony is also a mutually created ambience. So is communal tension. The fundamentalist Muslim leaders are playing on the insecurity of their co-religionists in order to consolidate their own position. As one Muslim lawyer from a central Indian town told me — they are increasing the prejudices against their people and their religion by projecting both as being anti-women. It would be more to the point if the minority leaders concentrated on their more genuine grievances — employment, education and safety. But then these are the grievances of all the poor and there is not much possibility of creating a vote bank out of them.

Ugly Game

It is too much to expect politicians not to endeavour to consolidate their positions. But the government has to rise above party politics. There are some situations that don't go away if one shuts one's eyes. Many of us are deeply alarmed to read the statements issued by the government including the Prime Minister. Mr Rajiv Gandhi went out of his way to assure the Momin conference held in Delhi on December 3, 1985, that his government was not averse to reviewing any law which came into conflict with the personal law of any group! Is this the government's understanding of the Constitution and of secularism? As a national daily pointed out in its editorial — such promises will not mollify or appease. They will only whet the hunger for more concessions, however unreasonable they may be.

In the recent times, the Congress has succeeded — with some help from the Akalis and the extremists — in persuading Sikhs to see themselves as a minority. We are still smarting from the self-inflicted wounds of that ugly game.

Since at least the Second World War, the fate of appeasers should have been obvious to everyone. Hitler's power grew to menacing proportions in the shadow of Neville Chamberlain's policy of appeasement. Putting down Hitler taxed the strength of the rest of the world including the Germans — No actually breaking point. Do we know that we will not be called upon to pay the same terrible price as the Third Reich?

Lucknow.

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Shah Bano's case is closed and reason as was his earlier on Mr Shahabuddin's reactionary viewpoint. Muslim law is not a security event of divorce but only consideration for the marriage. Hence the Court did nothing extraordinary providing for added security to a Muslim wife event of her divorce. The interpretation of Sections 127(3) (b) of Code of Criminal Procedure is extremely sound. persons with narrow political views will call it an attack on personal law of Muslims. It is a natural corollary to such a will be to provide for separate punishment to Muslims under the Indian Penal Code because the Muslim law always recommend rigorous imprisonment or death by hanging as a penalty for a crime and a penal punishment for Muslims in this country should range from chopping of hands to public hanging. Obviously, all this has political advantage attached. And who knows better about perhaps, Mr Shahabuddin.

Foreign Policy Machine

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Foreign Policy Machine

I—Time To Stem The Rot

Ramesh Bhandari took over as the foreign secretary in the ministry of external affairs. On that day the world knew that his date of birth was precisely 13 months and only 45 days away. Just as he was occupying the foreign secretary's chair, the Prime Minister's firm opposition to giving extensions to superannuating top civil servants was also being advertised from the house-tops. Interestingly, the man to speak out most forcefully against the "pernicious practice of extensions" was none other than Mr Bhandari himself.

Under such circumstances, in any well-run foreign office anywhere in the world, a decision would have been taken, at the latest, by the turn of the year to either make an exception to the rule and give Mr Bhandari an extension or name his successor. But, in a manner entirely typical of the way South Block has learnt to function over the years, neither of these things has been done. Instead, a miasma of unhealthy speculation and gnawing uncertainty has been created. That this has disrupted work, as much at the ministry's headquarters as in its myriad missions overseas, is the least part of the dismal story.

Messy Manipulation

Far more damaging is that the race has been allowed to be converted into messy manoeuvring and even manipulation. Anyone pretending that lobbies of various kinds, power brokers on the fringes of the ruling party's centre of authority, godfathers of contending candidates and plain busybodies have not got into the act is either an ignoramus or incapable of telling the truth.

Between the second week of May and the fourth week of December last year I had occasion to travel to five countries, across three continents—Japan, Hong Kong, Thailand, the United States and Britain—meeting, in the process, scores of Indian diplomats, several of them high-ranking ambassadors and quite a few men and women of exceptional ability, surrounded, of course, by a fair quota of mediocrities.

It was an eye-opener to me that the questions preoccupying most of them related not to the pursuit of India's vital interests in their areas of operation but to the issue of an extension to the foreign secretary. In the U.S., another ubiquitous question was whether an extension would be given to ambassador Bajpai. But that was a sideshow. The main interest centred on the foreign secretary's future.

Questions asked were in themselves more revealing than any answers that could possibly have been provided: "If Mr Bhandari is not being given an extension, would he be made secretary-general? And if neither of these developments is taking place who would be the new foreign secretary? Can you tell me who is backing whom?" And so on. During the six weeks since my return from foreign travels, the same or similar questions have continued to dog me in Delhi at almost every step.

What follows would normally not have found a mention in this article. But now there is no escape from it.

But newspaper reports have been declaring that Mr Venkateswaran would be the next ambassador to the Soviet Union. And they have been adding that, besides him, some others would also be bypassed and Mr S.K. Singh, at present ambassador to Pakistan, made foreign secretary.

Mr Singh's qualifications and qualities for the top job are acknowledged even by his foes, leave alone his friends. If finally chosen for the post, he would serve for nearly four years which would make for continuity in the leadership of the foreign service that the IFS sorely needs. But only the very naive would be unaware that those who do not relish the prospect of Mr Singh being the next foreign secretary are not sitting idle.

In any case, all that has been said in the foregoing two paragraphs may well have been overtaken by events already or might recede into limbo later.

For just before Mr Rajiv Gandhi left for the Maldives over the weekend, the world went round among "usually well-informed sources" that the "whole issue" had been "reopened", that the Prime Minister would reflect on the problem on the long flights to and from Male and that a final decision would be announced almost immediately after his return.

Of course, no announcement has been made and none is likely in the next few days. In other words, far from being doused down, unsavoury lobbying and guessing game has been given a fresh lease of life.

Even when it is fully recognised that all ministries and departments of the Union government, not the foreign office alone, are run down and often badly managed—the ministry of public undertakings, for instance, has had three secretaries in 10 months—the fact must be faced that external affairs is not just another ministry. Its role is unique because it has to look after India's interest globally. Its structure and functioning have to be different and more efficient than those, say, of the departments of animal husbandry, statistics or labour.

Real Malady

It is in this context that the present process of selecting a new foreign secretary has been transformed into the agonising question: "Is this the way to run the foreign policy machine of a great country of 750 million people which, irrespective of being or not being chairman of the non-aligned movement (NAM), has vital interests in the four corners of the world?"

One must hasten to add that the depressing scenario described so far is not the basic malaise but only its eloquent symptom. The real malady is that the rot has gone deep into the whole system of decision-making on foreign policy and, though this rot did not start overnight, the time has come to stem it without any further delay. Or else

Almost every other limb of the present government existed in some form or another even before independence and therefore had some tradition or ethos of its own. Only the foreign office did not exist and was virtually created from scratch by Panditji with the assistance of Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai who was designated secretary-general and Mr K.P.S. Menon, who was made foreign secretary. Since the Commonwealth mattered those days the Commonwealth secretary formed the third member of the trioka at the top. But the secretary-general was very much the leader of the team and the areas of responsibility of the foreign secretary and the Commonwealth secretary were precisely defined.

Above all, however, the foreign office was an extension of Panditji's towering personality. His vision of the world was unique and utterly unmatched by the ICS officers who had plunged into the unfamiliar waters of diplomacy having had all their training in maintaining law and order or collecting revenue.

Instead of there being a well-established foreign policy machine, as in Britain, France and even the U.S. with political leaders presiding over it coming and going in this country the process was reversed. Nehru's job was to make policy, often in great detail, and hope that in the process the machine would learn to play its due role in the fullness of time.

Costly Conviction

The hope was, however, belied. Some honourable exceptions apart, the fancy dans of the foreign service spent more time in assuming superior airs and scrambling for prized posts in the fleshpots of western Europe and the United States. Everyone in the foreign office, strutting about as a co-worker of Nehru, considered himself a cut above his opposite number in every other ministry.

There was also a bigger flaw about which nothing was done. Every human institution has its frailties, mutual jealousies and rivalries are inevitable and often intrigue can descend to very low levels. But no foreign service anywhere can survive, let alone flourish, without *esprit de corps*. This alas was conspicuous by its absence.

It was originally believed that the lack of team spirit was due to the hotch-potch nature of the hurriedly organised service, in which the ICS Brahmins looked down upon all others and a similar caste-consciousness percolated down the line. The odd-bods recruited from the princely order or the demobbed forces were looked down upon with particular disdain from both above and below.

This cosy conviction has turned out to be hollow. The foreign service is now wholly homogeneous. It consists, especially at the higher levels, only of those chosen on merit by the UPSC, through an open and all-India competition. And yet neither the morale nor the cohesion of the IFS is any better than in the era of bewildering heterogeneity. There are many reasons for this, including poor leadership, both professional and ministerial, and a diminishing faith in the fairness of selection and promotion. The time has come to stem it without any further delay. Or else



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By W.M. SHAIKH

MR RAJIV GANDHI conceded recently that some changes in Muslim personal law are necessary but should be evolved by consensus among the religious leaders concerned rather than by unilateral enforcement. Perhaps the best way to begin is to prepare a background paper analysing all the issues raised by the Shah Bano judgement and detailing the law and practices in other Islamic countries. It may even become the basis of a consensus acceptable to all. This is all the more necessary in view of the raging controversy over the so-called Muslim Women Bill now pending before Parliament.

The status of the Muslim personal law overseas relating to polygamous marriages and dissolution of marriages alone is pertinent in this context but it affects the rights of all Muslim women. We, therefore, will deal in these articles exclusively with this and not with the Muslim laws of inheritance, parentage, legitimacy and guardianship which, although important, do not affect the rights of women. Nor are they of a controversial nature.

Before the advent of Islam unlimited polygamy was a general practice in the Arabian tribes. Mohammed restricted the right of polygamy to four concurrent wives. (Incidentally, in lay circles at least, the Prophet is wrongly misjudged as the originator of this system.) In the Quranic text, the law is laid down in Sura 4, verse 3:

If ye fear that ye shall not Be able to deal justly With the orphans Marry women of your choice, Two, or three, or four But if ye fear that ye shall not Be able to deal justly (with them), Then only one, or (a captive) That your right hands possess That will be more suitable. To prevent you From doing injustice."

All schools are agreed that a Muslim man does not require permission to contract a second marriage or subsequent marriages up to a maximum of four. Many liberated groups of women, particularly those affected by western education and culture, regard the man's right to take a second wife and a third wife and a fourth wife as severely hindering progress towards the emancipation of Muslim women. On the other hand, the conservative sections of the Muslim community have been challenged into issuing a continuous stream of apologetic or polemic explanations to counter the criticism of many western orientalists. As a matter of fact, polygamy is decreasing as western ideas of marriage and romantic love spread in the Muslim community.

Now let us examine the law relating to polygamy in Islamic countries. In Jordan, there is provision

that a woman, at the time of marriage, can stipulate that she will have the right to divorce in specified circumstances or to live in a specified place. Indeed, she can even stipulate that the husband should not saddle her with a co-wife! But such a stipulation can be enforced only if it is incorporated in the registered marriage deed and also in the certificate by the Qadi. In Iran marriage with more than one wife is not allowed except with the permission of the Qadi and the grant of such permission is usually based on the condition that the husband's financial position is sound enough to take care of more than one wife. Likewise, in Iraq, marriage with more than one wife is not permitted except with the permission of the Qadi who grants such permission on the husband's financial position sound and where injustice between the wives is not feared. All those who enter into a contract of marriage with more than one woman in contravention of the above condition are liable to imprisonment for period not exceeding one year, fine not exceeding hundred *dina* or both.

In Tunisia, on the other hand plurality of wives is positively prohibited. Any person who, being already married and before marriage is lawfully dissolved, marries again, shall be liable to imprisonment for one year or a fine of 2,40,000 francs, or both. In Syria the Qadi can refuse a married man permission to marry another woman if it is proved that he is incapable of maintaining two wives.

The position is similar in Pakistan to that in other Muslim countries except that there the competent authority is an administrative body which is clothed with limited judicial powers. Earlier, the task was performed by union committees but these were abolished in 1972 at the functions of their chairman have been taken over by civil judges. If second marriage is solemnised, a man faces the possibility of criminal proceedings being instituted against him but the second marriage maintained as valid. The second marriage, however, cannot be registered. And the absence of registration would make it extremely difficult to prove the existence of a valid marriage.

In India there has been no legislative reform at all of the Muslim personal law on polygamy. The only protection that is available is a stipulation in the contract that the husband shall not take a second wife.

It can thus be seen from the above that, unlike in India, certain external checks in most of the Islamic countries act as a brake upon second or third marriages. In Tunisia, of course, polygamy has been completely abolished by law.

(To Be Concluded)

Sir, —I agree with you that it is unfortunate that the Bill had to be rushed through the Lok Sabha—whipped through, so to speak. Still let us see what has happened. Undivorced Muslim women who have been deserted or turned out by their husbands can still claim maintenance under section 125 of the Cr. P.C. They have not been deprived of any rights or benefits by the Bill which relates only to divorcee Muslim women.

It is true that the Bill deprives Muslim divorcee women of the right to claim maintenance under Section 125 from their ex-husbands but it is also true that it gives them certain advantages. We have to ascertain whether, on the balance, they lose or gain from the Bill. But that has to be seen in the course of the next few years.

According to rough estimates, only five per cent Muslim women get divorced. Section 125 enables an ex-wife to get maintenance from the ex-husband if he is a man of substantial means. As we all know, hardly half of all Indian men can fit into that description. Among Muslims poverty is relatively rampant. A reasonable estimate would be that hardly about 40 per cent Muslim men can be said to be of substantial means. So, out of the five Muslim husbands who divorce their wives, three could escape the dragnet of section 125 merely because they are not of substantial means.

The second condition for availing of any benefit under Section 125 is that the woman must be unable to maintain herself—she must be destitute, on the verge of vagrancy. Out of the two divorcing Muslim husbands who are proved to be of substantial means, one could get away by proving that the ex-wife is not a destitute, that she has a certain amount of jewellery or has inherited some property, or is educated and is capable of earning her living and hence not qualified to receive anything under section 125.

That would leave just about one Muslim divorced ex-husband who can be proved to be of substantial means and whose divorced ex-wife can be proved to be a destitute. This one particular Muslim woman has been deprived of her right to claim maintenance under Section 125. I would agree that to that extent the Bill can be said to be retrograde.

speaker, Maulana Ali Mian, voiced a complaint that the press had blown the issue out of all proportions, particularly in the Shanbano case. Moreover, he also charged both the English and Hindi press with not giving proper coverage to Muslim news.

Maulana Ali Mian should take a close look at the contents of *Tamir-e-Hayat*, a fortnightly published by his own institution. Can he honestly say that the coverage given to other Muslim or non-Muslim leaders is in any way comparable to the amount and quality of coverage which he himself receives? When the answer cannot conceivably be in the affirmative, how can he feel justified in levelling accusations at and making demands from other sections of the press? How can he, in all conscience, blame others for having lost all sense of proportion?

SANIYASNAIN KHAN

I—Personal Law In Islamic Nations

By W.M. SHAIKH

MR RAJIV GANDHI conceded recently that some changes in Muslim personal law are necessary but should be evolved by consensus among the religious leaders concerned rather than by unilateral enforcement. Perhaps the best way to begin is to prepare a background paper analysing all the issues raised by the Shah Bano judgement and detailing the law and practices in other Islamic countries. It may even become the basis of a consensus acceptable to all. This is all the more necessary in view of the raging controversy over the so-called Muslim Women Bill now pending before Parliament.

The status of the Muslim personal law overseas relating to polygamous marriages and dissolution of marriages alone is pertinent in this context but it affects the rights of all Muslim women. We, therefore, will deal in these articles exclusively with this and not with the Muslim laws of inheritance, parentage, legitimacy and guardianship which, although important, do not affect the rights of women. Nor are they of a controversial nature.

Before the advent of Islam unlimited polygamy was a general practice in the Arabian tribes. Mohammed restricted the right of polygamy to four concurrent wives. (Incidentally, in lay circles at least, the Prophet is wrongly misjudged as the originator of this system.) In the Quranic text, the law is laid down in Sura 4, verse 3:

*If ye fear that ye shall not
Be able to deal justly
With the orphans
Marry women of your choice,
Two, or three, or four
But if ye fear that ye shall not
Be able to deal justly (with them),
Then only one, or (a captive)
That your right hands possess
That will be more suitable,
To prevent you
From doing injustice."*

All schools are agreed that a Muslim man does not require permission to contract a second marriage or subsequent marriages up to a maximum of four. Many liberated groups of women, particularly those affected by western education and culture, regard the man's right to take a second wife and a third wife and a fourth wife as severely hindering progress towards the emancipation of Muslim women. On the other hand, the conservative sections of the Muslim community have been challenged into issuing a continuous stream of apologetic or polemic explanations to counter the criticism of many western orientalists. As a matter of fact, polygamy is decreasing as western ideas of marriage and romantic love spread in the Muslim community.

Now let us examine the law relating to polygamy in Islamic countries. In Jordan, there is provision

that a woman, at the time of marriage, can stipulate that she will have the right to divorce in specified circumstances or to live in a specified place. Indeed, she can even stipulate that the husband should not saddle her with a co-wife! But such a stipulation can be enforced only if it is incorporated in the registered marriage deed and also in the certificate by the Qadi. In Iran, marriage with more than one wife is not allowed except with the permission of the Qadi and the grant of such permission is usually based on the condition that the husband's financial position is sound enough to take care of more than one wife. Likewise, in Iraq, marriage with more than one wife is not permitted except with the permission of the Qadi who grants such permission if the husband's financial position is sound and where injustice between the wives is not feared. All those who enter into a contract of marriage with more than one woman in contravention of the above conditions are liable to imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year, or fine not exceeding hundred *dinars* or both.

In Tunisia, on the other hand, plurality of wives is positively prohibited. Any person who, being already married and before the marriage is lawfully dissolved, marries again, shall be liable to imprisonment for one year or a fine of 2,40,000 francs, or both. In Syria, the Qadi can refuse a married man permission to marry another woman if it is proved that he is not capable of maintaining two wives.

The position is similar in Pakistan to that in other Muslim countries except that there the competent authority is an administrative body which is clothed with limited judicial powers. Earlier, the task was performed by union committees but these were abolished in 1972 and the functions of their chairman have been taken over by civil judges. If a second marriage is solemnised, the man faces the possibility of criminal proceedings being instituted against him but the second marriage is maintained as valid. The second marriage, however, cannot be registered. And the absence of registration would make it extremely difficult to prove the existence of a valid marriage.

In India there has been no legislative reform at all of the Muslim personal law on polygamy. The only protection that is available is a stipulation in the contract that the husband shall not take a second wife.

It can thus be seen from the above that, unlike in India, certain external checks in most of the Islamic countries act as a brake upon second or third marriages. In Tunisia, of course, polygamy has been completely abolished by law.

(To Be Concluded)

Sir.—I agree with the unfortunate that the Bill rushed through the whipped through they are destitute or let us see what their divorcing ex-husband means of substantial means or been divorced by the new law any and even a Muslim woman would be able to file a simple suit and claim (a) her full dowry, (b) all that she brought as dowry, (c) all that she had received from her husband and in-laws, (d) maintenance for *iddat* and maintenance for a further period of two years if she is nursing a baby child of the divorcing ex-husband and (e) custody of her minor children with their maintenance to be paid by the divorcing father. The magistrate can pass orders sending the defaulting divorcing ex-husband to jail. Further if the divorcing ex-husband defaults in any of the above respects, the divorced Muslim woman's right under section 125 gets revived automatically because the Bill exempts only that divorcing Muslim ex-husband from the purview of section 125 who has given his divorced ex-wife all the things mentioned above.

A. R. SHERVANI

New Delhi.

II

Sir.—The passage of the Muslim Women Bill represents the most blatant betrayal of the sentiments of all the women of this country and portends difficult times ahead. The Bill has the distinction of being passed in record time in Parliament in spite of the countrywide controversy and reactions it sparked in its wake. The passage of the Bill has demonstrated beyond doubt the utter disregard which the ruling party has for public sentiments and opinion on an issue of grave concern to the lives of thousands of Muslim women. The zeal and haste with which the Bill has been rushed through cannot but raise doubts about the intentions of a government which supposedly sees women as a crucially important human resource.

MADHU

New Delhi.

III

Sir.—According to a report published in your paper (May 5) on the dialogue organised by the All-India Solidarity Forum on the Muslim Women Bill, the main speaker, Maulana Ali Mian, voiced a complaint that the press had blown the issue out of all proportions, particularly in the Shanbhag case. Moreover, he also charged both the English and Hindi press with not giving proper coverage to Muslim news.

Maulana Ali Mian should take a close look at the contents of *Tamir-e-Hayat*, a fortnightly published by his own institution. Can he honestly say that the coverage given to other Muslim or non-Muslim leaders is in any way comparable to the amount and quality of coverage which he himself receives? When the answer cannot conceivably be in the affirmative, how can he feel justified in levelling accusations at and making demands from other sections of the press? How can he, in all this, blame others for having lost all sense of proportion?

SANIYASNAIN KHAN

Personal Law In Islamic Nations

By W.M. SHAIKH

Let us now consider the reforms achieved in some of the important Islamic countries in the matter of dissolution of marriages or repudiation of marriages which, in simple and common terms, has come to be known as *talaq*.

Talaq has taken different forms. First, there is *talaq-as-sunna (ahsan)* where the husband pronounces *talaq* during the *tuhr* period, that is when the wife is free from her menstrual flow. He then refrains from sexual intercourse during the *iddat* period of three menstrual cycles (or if she be beyond the age for menstruation, three lunar months). At the end of *iddat* period, the marriage is terminated.

The other form is *talaq-as-sunna (hasan)*. In this the husband repudiates his wife three times. The first *talaq* takes place during a *tuhr* period. Then he pronounces the third *talaq* and the *talaq* becomes irrevocable. These two forms of *talaq* are the most approved methods of repudiation although *ahsan* is better than *hasan*.

Now there is a third method of *talaq* and this is called the *talaq-al-bida*. The most common method of *talaq-al-bida* is for the triple pronouncement of *talaq hasan* to be brought together in a single sitting. Such a divorce creates an irrevocable termination of the status of marriage. This is the most common method of repudiation of the marriage although it has been disapproved of by classical jurisprudence.

Other Forms

There are two other forms of repudiation: the *ila* and the *zihar*. Under *ila*, the husband swears on oath to abstain from marital relations for four months. If the husband keeps his oath, it is equivalent to one irrevocable pronouncement of divorce. The *zihar* is an impious declaration as saying to the wife "you are for me as the back of my mother". *Zihar* by itself is not a divorce. Neither *ila* nor *zihar* are of any particular importance today.

In Egypt what has been adopted is the *hasan* and *ahsan* methods by abolishing the *talaq-al-bida*. In Syria, the position is a little different in the sense that the matter is brought before a *qadi* and, where the *qadi* considers that a husband has repudiated his wife without reasonable cause, he may ask the husband to pay his wife compensation limited to one year's maintenance and support. This follows from the Quranic statement in Sura II, verse 241, "for divorced women, maintenance on a reasonable scale".

Tunisia has done one better and the provision of the law states that extra-judicial divorces are no longer to be effective. Any divorce outside a court of law is without legal effect. In Iran, too, the right of the husband to repudiate his wife without any judicial intervention is abolished. The

arbitrators to be appointed on one or more of a number of grounds based primarily on the culpability of the other party. The arbitrators attempt reconciliation and, in the event of failure, submit a report to the court. The court will then issue what is referred to as a "certificate of impossibility of reconciliation". The certificate remains valid for a three-month period.

In Pakistan, a husband is required to issue to the chairman of the Union Council a notice in writing of the *talaq* immediately after the pronouncement. The effect of the notice is to freeze the *talaq* for 90 days during which time the Union Council appoints an arbitration council for purposes of reconciliation. After the expiry of 90 days, *talaq* takes effect unless a reconciliation is effected.

However unsatisfactory the law might be in Pakistan, there is at least an opportunity that the hasty, impetuous repudiation will be thought over once again and the marriage will not be dissolved. No such reform has taken place in India so far.

Secular Attitudes

Not all the countries where changes have been brought about in personal law are really Islamic in substance though they have retained an outward Islamic form. Most of these countries carry a socialistic stamp and the changes they have made in Muslim personal law are governed mostly by their secular attitudes. Tunisia offers a vivid example. Plurality of wives is positively prohibited in that country, and any person who transgresses this prohibition is held liable to imprisonment for one year or for a fine of 240,000 francs or both. In the matter of divorce, the Tunisian law stipulates that extra-judicial divorces are no longer to be effective and any divorce outside a court of law is without any legal effect.

But one has to admit that, over the years, Tunisia has made a mince-meat of the *Shari'at*. Therefore, it cannot be relied upon to provide any effective guidelines in the Indian situation. It is said that Islam, having risen from Arabia in the 6th century has now finally settled in India because India has provided the necessary focus and wherewithal for its development on truly traditional lines. Yet some changes appear to be necessary, especially those affecting the rights of women. For example, polygamous marriages will have to be rigorously controlled by a system of checks and balances and by bringing the practice within the purview of civil judges. Similarly, in the matter of dissolution of marriages, we shall have to adopt the *ahsan* and the *hasan* methods by abolishing the *talaq-al-bida*.

(Concluded)

Muslim Bill Funding: IKS

Sir, — Mr Girilal Jain in his article "The Muslim Women Bill: A Rajiv has pushed it" (May 14) has aptly analysed and evaluated the role played by the Prime Minister and his coterie in conceiving and ratifying the Muslim Women Bill. The Bill, at last, has been passed by Parliament. A period of mourning has begun for the right thinking Indians—not because divorce would now be on the rise, but because many more manoeuvres may be in the offing. The haste shown in pushing through the Muslim Women Bill will prove to be harmful in the long run.

It will not be improper to interpose the entire episode as an issue of intelligence for the Prime Minister. The issue of a whip was ample proof of the fact that there was no consensus amongst the party members and the party bosses had anticipated a change of line by Congress in the wake of mass protests against the Bill.

ANDLEEB Z. N.

Bareilly.

II

Sir, — Mr Girilal Jain has concluded that the reason for the Prime Minister pushing the Bill is to prove that "he could be firm" after he had taken a decision" but he has been firm on an issue which is not the very basis on which the Indian Constitution is based. It is going to cause incalculable damage to the country as a whole in the long run. The Muslim community is particularly affected.

The passing of the Muslim Women Bill is akin to the Lucknow Pact ultimately leading to the division of the country. It is also reminiscent of the Congress leadership after the Hindu that it would not accept the creation of Pakistan. It came to it within a year in 1946 elections. Appeasement policy; it only whets the appetite for more. More recently, the Muslim League in India should be clear to all.

If Mr Rajiv Gandhi's advisers believe that by passing the Muslim Women Bill they can regain their vote bank, they have mistaken; the credit has gone to the credit of the Muslim League. The credit among the masses should be taken by rank communists and fundamentalists and others.

My feeling is that if Mr Gandhi wanted to show efficient management business and that he is a tough man then there were many ways and better occasions to demonstrate these qualities.

New Delhi.
It should now be our mission to educate ourselves and others concerning the benefits of a civil code which does not offend against any religion, but upholds human dignity to all.

MRS JAMILA VERMA

New Delhi.

standing career as a jurist hardly any expertise in Islamic jurisprudence. He should refrain from expressing views on a sensitive subject to the Muslim community. His opinion on such a subject is that of a legal practitioner, not a medical man. It is a dangerous medicine to a patient.

M. ASLAM

Srinagar.

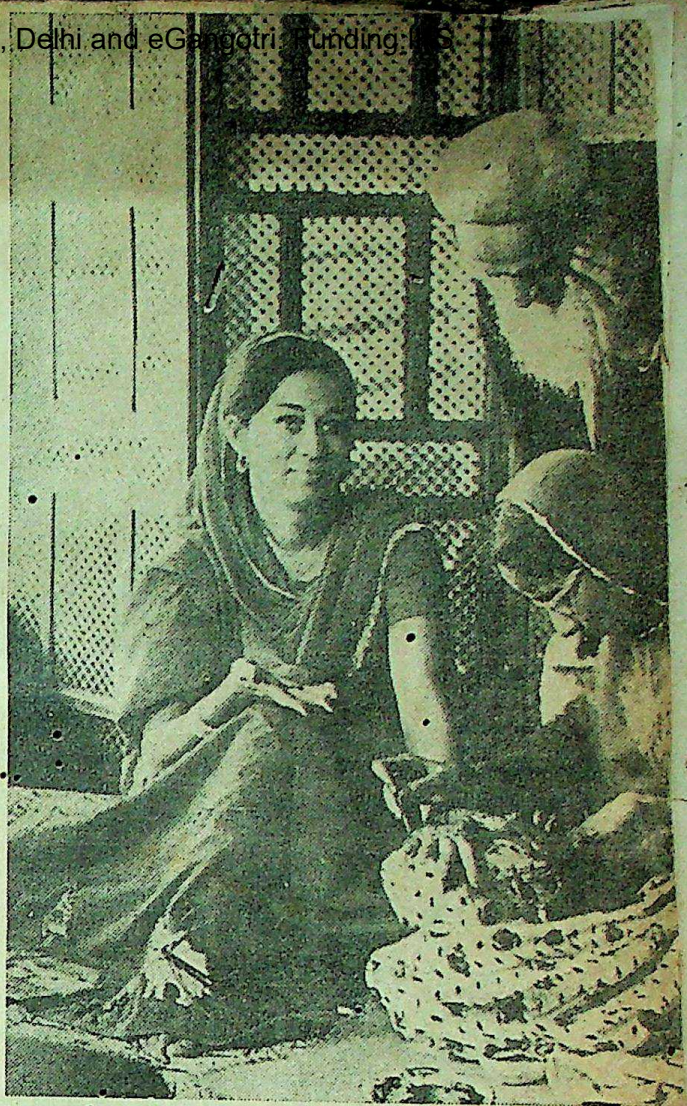
the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill illustrates the ineptness of those at the helm of affairs in New Delhi. A problem had no doubt arisen as a result of the Supreme Court's judgement in the Shah Bano case on the issue of maintenance for a divorced wife. Muslims in general were upset with the judgement (the Supreme Court had made uncharitable unfounded statements on the status of women in Islam). They were divided on the basic issue.

Orthodox believed that a Muslim husband owes nothing to a divorced wife once he has paid the maintenance for the period of the iddat (3 months and 10 days). A large section of the educated Muslims disagreed with this approach and insisted that the Quran sanctions "a fair and reasonable maintenance to a divorced woman until she remarries."

Pragmatic leadership would have waited for the storm to subside before formulating an appropriate response to the situation. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and his aides rushed in where angels could have feared to tread. The government ignored the nationalist Muslim leadership and treated the Muslim League and other communal organisations as the spokesmen of the community. The result in the form of a bill is there for anyone to see.

A central weakness of the bill is that in the name of safeguarding the Muslim Personal Law it violates the specific injunctions of the Quran and the Shariat as these have been interpreted by the best recognised authorities over the centuries. There is, for example, no provision in the Quran or the Shariat which can oblige the members of the parent's family of a divorced Muslim woman to look after her. Similarly, no one can ever change the terms of a wakf to oblige its managing trustees to undertake activities which the original donor has not provided for. Yet the bill in question seeks to cast the responsibility for the maintenance of a divorced Muslim woman on the parent's family members and a wakf board. In most places wakf boards do not even exist and where they do they do not have funds even for their normal activities.

UN SHOURIE exposes these infirmities.



In the name of Muslim Personal Law

There is some comedy to what the government has been saying and doing on the Muslim Women's Bill. A look at the background will lead us to know.

Section 125 says that a husband manifestly sufficient means and the wife does not have the ability to maintain herself, the husband is bound to provide for her. The maximum of Rs. 500 per month is prescribed. This is the government's interpretation of the provision. It is Section 127(3)(B) that comes into operation only if the wife has under Personal Law been paid something for maintenance. There is nothing in the Muslim Personal Law, which will exempt the husband from the obligation which is cast upon him by Section 125.

This is what the courts have held. And this is what the Supreme Court has said. The government's interpretation is a complete distortion of the law. It is a complete distortion of the law. It is a complete distortion of the law.

As Muslim Personal Law does not require the husband to pay anything to maintain the wife he discards, the courts said, and as the proviso of Section 127(3)(B) comes into operation only if the wife has under Personal Law been paid something for maintenance, there is nothing in the Muslim Personal Law, which will exempt the husband from the obligation which is cast upon him by Section 125.

gations as may fall upon them under Section 125.

The courts held that this was not so. The mehar, they specified, is an amount that the husband agrees to pay at the time of marriage out of regard for the bride. It has nothing to do with the conjugal life that follows upon marriage. It has nothing to do with divorce. It is not arrived at with any reference to what the wife would require for maintenance should she be divorced.

As Muslim Personal Law does not require the husband to pay anything to maintain the wife he discards, the courts said, and as the proviso of Section 127(3)(B) comes into operation only if the wife has under Personal Law been paid something for maintenance, there is nothing in the Muslim Personal Law, which will exempt the husband from the obligation which is cast upon him by Section 125.

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riage in consideration of conjugal life and had nothing whatever to do with the subject matter of the legislation, namely maintenance, after divorce (which in fact, is the opposite of conjugal life).

The draft was intended to provide that if the parties had agreed or their customary or Personal Law so provided, that a specific sum of money should be paid as and by way of maintenance after divorce and the whole of such sum had been paid, the magistrate who awarded the maintenance could alter or cancel his order. It is clear that unless there was a specific provision under the customary or Personal Law, providing for maintenance after divorce, Section 127(3)(B) will not come into operation.

Not just that, this note which has been circulated to justify a bill that aims at overturning the Shah Bano judgement, concludes "hygiene while chop-remember to follow of your beauty kit. But Foods can be a part."

That is the comic part. The quixotic part is the provision about the wakf boards. The bill says that in case the parents, brothers etc. of the cast-off wife cannot maintain her, these boards will. What is a wakf? What are these boards? What is their condition? Can they discharge an open-ended responsibility of this kind?

Wakfs

A MUSLIM creates a wakf when he endows his property in perpetuity and irrevocably for a charitable purpose. There is an important caveat, however. The endowment having been created and the owner having in a sense extinguished his rights over it irrevocably, the benefits from the property may not immediately pass to the beneficiaries — for instance, the poor — for whom the endowment has been created. The endower may, for instance, consecrate the property to a religious purpose, or to the education of the poor, or to the relief of the distressed. It begins with the endowment of the physical body with the spiritual body. This is the process of the physical body with the spiritual body. This is the process of the physical body with the spiritual body. This is the process of the physical body with the spiritual body.

aw...

me to my child and my child's child and their ^{nasl} forever, while there are any" and that only after that would the proceeds go to the poor. (On all this see the authoritative exposition of Syed Ameer Ali, *Mahomedan Law* Volume 1, Thacker, Spink and Co., 1912; specially chapters X and XI; the foregoing quotations are from Pp. 281-2.)

We do not quite know how many wakfs there are in India at present. For 20 years they have been estimated to number around a lakh. Their properties have been variously estimated to be worth Rs. 150 crores to Rs. 700 crores. Similarly, their income has been estimated to be anywhere from Rs. 5 to a potential Rs. 25 crores a year.

While wakfs are the creation of pious Muslims, wakf boards, one for each state, are creations of our legislatures. They have been constituted under Central and state wakf acts. There are separate boards for important shrines, most notably the dargah at Ajmer. There are also local wakf committees. Members of all these are partly nominated and partly elected.

The boards have been set up to ensure that the wakfs are managed properly. The wakfs in turn are supposed to contribute five to six per cent of their net income to the boards.

At the apex — although it is only an advisory body — is the Central Wakf Council. It is meant to advise the Central government on policy, and also to undertake a few welfare schemes directly. The wakf boards are supposed to contribute one per cent of the net income of the wakfs in their jurisdiction to the council for its expenses, and were being discussed recently to this.

Ghulam Rasool Kar said, "I feel that wakf properties have come into the hands of persons who, by exploiting religion, want to influence and overawe the government."

They are such clever persons, he said, that they are inflaming Muslim sentiments to further their hold on the chair. He spoke of a dargah in Kashmir whose income of Rs. 1 to 1.5 crores was being used, he said, "for political exploitation". The persons controlling wakf properties, he said, looked upon them and were using them as their personal property, as their jagirs.

Maulana Asarulla Haq testified that "thousands of lakhs" were being received at the dargahs, "but we know well," he said, "that from this lakhs are embezzled, people pocket them."

In the Lok Sabha Syed Masudul Hossain was incensed enough to exclaim, "Yes, some mutawallis should go to hell. For some mutawallis wakf properties have become a personal business. Allah does not come and gobble the land that is given in His name. The mutawallis gobble it up."

In brief, while many pious Muslims have created wakfs for charity, the wakfs have become instead a poorly managed real estate business, a business in the hands of unscrupulous agents



schemes. In 1984-85 it received about Rs. 6 lakhs on this account, and Rs. 50 lakhs as a grant from the Central government. (The boards receive their subsidy from the respective states.)

Condition Of Wakfs

In the last 20 years every single study which has examined the wakfs has concluded, to use one of the milder expressions that the evidence calls forth, that

Rafiq Alam said that persons who were appointed to the boards had nothing to do with wakfs. Their sole concern was to further their personal ends and to see how to swallow the property.

Abdul Rashid Qabli complained of the manner in which politics marred the boards and he dilated upon the consequences. In all this the MPs were once again confirming the sorry state that the wakf inquiry committee had documented.

"The wakf boards have admitted in their replies to our queries," it said, "that they have not been able to perform even a few of the most important duties and responsibilities entrusted to them under the Central Wakf Act, such as inspection of major wakfs, framing of proper schemes, carrying out the audit of at least five per cent of the wakfs under their jurisdiction, with the result that almost all the statutory provisions of the act have remained a dead letter all these years."

For instance, on the matter of inspecting accounts it noted that the boards had not been able to inspect the accounts of even one per cent of the wakfs in their charge. As noted earlier, in only ".01 per cent" of the cases had the mutawallis submitted budgets, and even these the boards had not examined.

It noted that while these were tall orders, in fact "in the

they are in a terrible, perhaps an irretrievable mess. In the view of one and all the person who has done the most to reduce them to their sorry state is the one who was supposed to have managed the properties on behalf of God, the mutawalli himself.

The wakf inquiry committee which submitted its final report in 1976 correctly called him "the king-pin of wakf administration." It noted that "with the lower-

instance, when it has had to supersede patently corrupt, fractious and mismanaged boards, whenever it has tried to acquire the powers to supervise effectively (for instance, when in 1984 it urged additional powers for the commissioners), it has been accused of interfering in the religious affairs of Muslims, of trying to "nationalise" the religious affairs of Muslims, of trying to "nationalise" a religious institution through the backdoor.

Nor can any non-Muslim be blamed for the plight of the wakfs. While piloting the bill on July 23, 1984, the law minister told the Rajya Sabha at some length and with some emphasis, "But you have to admit, though I do not want to say it, our brothers, our Muslim brothers, our mutawallis, our board members are the ones who have done all this". "The anger you have," he told the Muslim members, "the anger you have in your heart is very little against me, it is largely against your associates". "You pointed to what happened in Punjab, Haryana," he said. "Who were the members? Your Muslim brothers and mine."

This is the bitter truth. But unfortunately no reform movement has arisen among Muslims to set the wakfs right. Muslim "leaders" — i.e. Muslim MPs, office-bearers of the Muslim League, heads of Muslim religious and theological organisa-

ing of the general morality and integrity of society, the tempo of materialism, the erosion of spiritual values, the flocking of black sheep, mutawallis has nature enormously during the decades." It recalled rocketing land prices like had "put a temptation".

Continued on P

be imagined.

The reasons for plain. As putting away wife on the was patently into government wanted that it was also p serve, "institution". The fundamentalism keen on the pre their point of thing was that had recognised lay down the law.

But the consequences fraud are plain boards have no no liability having p possibility on them ment must increase to the boards. control of the wakf reported to have the government boards Rs. 50 crores this account.

Should this bill government funds wakf the hold of committees, govern as Muslim MPs, selves testified are rupt and retrograde our society, and stop there. After it be that our provide its funds divorced Muslim Why not divorced tian, Parsi, or, divorced Hindu

Crime and punishment

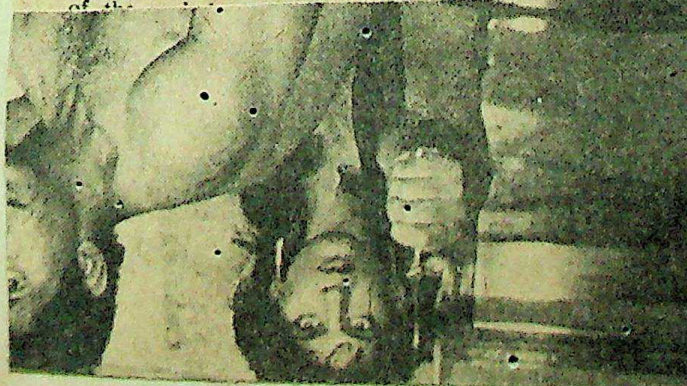
In Islam

Since the revelation of the Quran the world has witnessed a tremendous revolution in human values. New problems entailing new approaches, broader outlooks and new concepts in the world of science and philosophy continue to arise. And like the world the Quran is also dynamic. Whenever, in view of a new contingency, fresh interpretation of the Quran was needed, the ummah (community) had been guided by those men of God who read the Quran with an inspired understanding which met the challenge of their times and suffered with courage when denounced by the mullah.

Part II of Syed Barakat Ahmad's article on the shari'a.



THE Quran is the record repeated 10 times



Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, whose mother-tongue was Arabic and who was the translator and commentator of the Quran addressed the following words to a reader of Al-Hilal who had praised the Maulana's mastery of the Quranic knowledge. He wrote:

Without any false modesty as witnessed a I must say I shudder to read on in human your words of praise. If the; of life. Stan- mystery and meaning of the; accepted and Quran could be understood out the centu- with the knowledge of Arabic fied. The very then I must admit I know the ian life have language. If religious know-ew problems ledge is required I would have aches, broader certainly tried to acquire it and concepts in the if the books of exegesis could ad philosophy help then I have a good col- And like the lection of them. But the first is also dyna- requirement to understand the iew of a new Quran is ittaqa (righteousness) terpretation of and tazkiya-i-nafs (purity of needed, the the heart). It is my great mis-ided by those fortune that I lack them. The ad the Quran heart which is empty of taqwa understanding (fear of God) and which is after enge of their the creature comforts and with courage ambition cannot expect to have the mullah. even a ray of Quranic light. a of great Scholarship and knowledge is ir piety and useless and intelligence has no God was still value. "This is Allah's grace; gifted with He bestows it upon whomso- The Prophet ever He pleases". (57:21) in each cen-

The door of the beloved e would be does not open i servant of with logic and wisdom; who would These are the mere a. The four- ornaments hools of law of the tale of love. nor clerics.

Believe me a non-Mutagqi ey set forth scholar has no share in the Quran in Quranic mystery. I have no s, and were place in this field. (Al-Hilal, llah for tak- September 8, 1912) iman reason-

With the seven conditions for the word of understanding the Quran given in the opening lines of Chapter 2 ifa (d. 767) and the explanation that Maulana prison and Azad has given, neither Mr. alik (d. 795) Justice Zaid nor Mr. Justice on his back Bakr nor a non-Muslim intel- forcibly dis- lectual can claim to interpret i'i (d. 820) the Quran. The Quran is the dangerous word of God or it is not; there and was sent is no meeting point between Ahmad bin these two opposing views. into prison

The sunnah, the divinely in- is. In the spired behaviour of the Pro- he was whip- phet, is the second source of aing sun till the shari'a. But it must be st conscious- clearly distinguished from the Hadith (tradition of the Prophet), religion, the The Ahadith (plural of Hadith) ook and the were collected 150 years after never closed. the death of the Prophet, while a (d. 1326). the sunnah (literally beaten path) ry model of existed at that very outset side claimed the by side with the Quran. The ad for him- Prophet transformed into action ison after what the Quran taught him. India Shah- mic law was ruling the land of d. 1764) de- Islam for more than 150 years, based on before the collections of Ahadith, it scholastic- started appearing. Hadith, which, ecedent, and has an element of speculation in application of it, is only a supporting witness ratory - pro- for the sunnah and can never adhering to override the Quran. our schools

Once these two sources, the use of itti- Quran and the sunnah, are ex- a of all the a of the process of human- h- already half- h- who arranged for the the producers Kullit Pal and Sundee- Khurana, writer Surtal Sanam, elshim rtes (course), Dalip Tahil, Akash- but he was- hums include Anupam Kher (of ne. any indication, Mahesh's close- el numbled- attendance at the marriage was- white silk- film star on the skirts. If the- ent Kazdal- Kaush, his latest project about re parents- it solo for Goly with the unit- nervous.

INTERTITLE Film Diary

MAHESH

Af



After The Muslim Bill

ment was putting out all the stops in its campaign to get the Muslim Women's (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Bill passed by a massive majority, an Urdu periodical in Delhi stated in an editorial that the Muslims had won the battle for the bill but the battlefield had to shift to the Babari Masjid (the site of the conflict over Shri Ram's birth place).

Reports from Uttar Pradesh and elsewhere in northern India indicate that the sentiments expressed by the magazine are shared by a large section of the Muslims of the Gangetic belt. There is a commonly held belief that Mr Gandhi cynically pushed through the bill only in order to secure Muslim votes and that it will take a great deal more to mollify them.

Far from persuading the more conservative segments of the Muslim population that the Congress Party is their natural ally, it has hardened the resolve of the fundamentalists to fight for more concessions on a host of other points. The Babri Mosque has clearly been chosen as the next battleground. But this too is only a beginning.

Muslims have a list of far more justifiable grievance many of which date back to and were an inevitable consequence of the partition. They believe, not without some justification, that they have been discriminated against in securing jobs in the police, the armed forces and in the administrative services. Most Muslims also believe, with less cause, that the dice are loaded against them when it comes to securing admission to universities, medical colleges and the IITs.

So far, aggrieved Muslims have sought redress within the system, by appealing to the courts, or to MLA and MP from their constituencies to bring pressure on the administration. But the alternative of opting out of the large democratic process and carving a niche for themselves through the reservation of seats in the civil services and educational institutions has been mooted more and more frequently in recent years by the Muslim League and its fellow travellers in other parties. The reaction to the Muslim Women's Bill shows that this concession may have only strengthened the fundamentalists' determination to obtain other concessions through confrontation.

Hindu Backlash

If this is, indeed, the case, then Mr Rajiv Gandhi and his advisers have made a most previous error of judgement. Instead of appeasing Muslim opinion, they may have inflamed it instead of containing the politics of confrontation they may have exacerbated it, and instead of securing votes for the Congress they may only have enlarged the constituency of the Muslim League.

Unfortunately, this may be smaller part of the damage that the bill has done. The greater part may be the Hindu backlash that is now building up throughout the country. If this is not speedily contained, it will not only destroy India's secular state but, if it goes out of control, unleash the tyranny of a vast majority on the minorities in this country.

The possibility that there might be such a backlash was raised both in political circles and in the present at the time when the government decided to adopt Mr Banatwala's bill.

pushed it aside. Later, when it became clear that the bill not only did not enjoy the support of the Muslim intelligentsia but was also causing acute unease in the ranks of the Congress Parliamentary Party, Mr Gandhi chose this, of all occasions, to demonstrate his firmness and to impose discipline on his party.

In fairness to the government it must also be pointed out that while it amended Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code to exempt divorced Muslim women from its purview, it did bring within the jurisdiction of the civil courts the enforcement of all the rights that Muslim women are supposed to enjoy under Islamic law, but which they are all too frequently denied in practice.

But by doing this it has only triggered a Hindu backlash. Where Mr Gandhi seems to have miscalculated is in not realising that such a backlash has been at least fifteen years in the making. It has been fuelled by three major developments, the most important of which has occurred ironically within the Hindu community itself. These are the open espousal by all parties of the politics of caste; the rise of Muslim fundamentalism in India as an echo to the fundamentalism sweeping West Asia; and most recently the wanton killing of innocent Hindus by machine-gun toting Sikh terrorists in Punjab.

New Perception

Hindu society could have absorbed the shock of the one or even two of these developments. But it is unable to absorb the impact of all three. What is worse, these three developments have jointly created an altogether new perception among many Hindus. This is that the democratic system itself is the main threat to Hindu society.

Since independence all political parties have appealed to caste sentiment in their effort to win elections. But from the early seventies this attempt ceased to be made only at the local or constituency level and became part of the election campaign at the state-level. This was done primarily through the instrument of job reservation. When state after state began to announce indiscriminate quotas for the backward classes, sometimes to nearly 90 per cent of all government jobs, and when the ruling party in each state took to announcing these reservations just before the elections, Hindus throughout the country began to fear not only that they faced social disintegration but that this was being actually connived at by self-seeking politicians. The near-civil war in Gujarat in 1984 and 1985, which was a direct result of the Congress Party's deliberate attempt after 1971 to consolidate the KHAM (Kshatriya, Harijan, Advaisi, Muslim) vote against the upper castes, confirmed the Hindus' worst fears.

The Hindus have also not been comfortable with the sudden inflow of money into Muslim religious and educational institutions, and the attempts at mass conversion that have resulted from fundamentalism. But, and in view of the highly dispersed Muslim population, these have not been seen as a serious threat to India's unity or secularism, even though they have led to ugly communal riots such as the ones that occurred in Moradabad, Aligarh and Meerut. It has taken the Muslim Women's Bill to make Hindus realise that the govern-

ment itself is betraying the majority community by pandering to Muslim fundamentalism, and conceding the two nation theory in all but name.

Lastly, while there is an overwhelming consensus, reflected in the December 1984 elections, that no sect or community will be allowed to disrupt India's unity most Hindus recognise that the killings in Punjab are the handiwork of a small band of fanatics and do not enjoy the tacit approval, let alone support, of the Sikhs. But coming on top of the other two developments, they have strengthened the growing belief among Hindus that they are being reduced to that seeming absurdity, a beleaguered majority, in their own homeland.

Together the three developments described above have begun to convince Hindus of all shades and castes that they are under a dual assault while their unity is being eroded from within by deliberately inflaming caste rivalries, they are under assault from Muslim, Sikh and even Christian fundamentalism from without. The country may, therefore, be on the brink of a perverted Hindu renaissance, perverted because it is born out of fear instead of out of self-confidence. But what is worse, it is a renaissance that shows a very danger of becoming anti-democratic. For more and more Hindus are coming to see the democratic system itself as the root of all these evils.

It may be argued that I am seeing bogeys where they do not exist, and that "Hindu" is an abstraction, the only real bonds in Hinduism being those of caste. This is a view that has been propagated earnestly by the Indian intelligentsia, partly to shore up the country's frail secularism, and partly to shut out harsh reality. But if the "Hindu" is an abstraction, so is the "Muslim" and the "Sikh" for both communities are as internally divided as the Hindus. But this does not prevent the spectre of communalism from raising its head over and over again. It must be realised that the "Muslim" of the Muslim League, the "Sikh" of the Damdami Taksal and the "Hindu" of the Arya Samaj are not only abstractions but also ideals. And people have regularly shed blood over ideals.

Political Fall-Out

Mrs Gandhi was fully aware of the incipient Hindu backlash and she contained it with the consummate skill that only she had, by visiting a temple here or a religious leader there. These little gestures kept Hindu fundamentalists, and notably the RSS, out of balance. The RSS in particular was torn between supporting an increasingly secular BJP and what seemed to be increasingly Hindu Congress. In states like Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Delhi, where the Hindus felt threatened, this led to an *en bloc* shift of the Hindu vote from the BJP to the Congress. Mr Rajiv Gandhi has neither his mother's political sensitivity nor her skill. The least he has done is to send the endangered Hindu from Jammu to Kanva, Kumari back into the RSS fold.

The political fallout of this shift has already begun. The BJP has elected Mr Advani its leader and stoutly reaffirmed RSS links. Mr Vajpayee has denounced Mr Gandhi's political ineptitude and raised the bogey of a threat to the beginning.

Ninth Guru—1eg Bahadur—enter the Golden Temple, for fear that thereby they might lose its income!

After Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) Bhai Mani Singh was appointed the custodian of the Golden Temple (and the *Akal Takhat*) by Mata Sundri, widow of Guru Gobind Singh. He held this office for about 20 years. After that for about three-quarters of a century, it is the *udasis* (Hindu in form, Sikh in belief) who looked after both the *Akal Takhat* and the Golden Temple. They unfortunately became hereditary, but were accepted by the whole *Panth* all the same for their devotion in most trying circumstances.

For a brief period, under Ranjit Singh (1799-1839), Akali Phoola Singh became the *jathedar* of the *Akal Takht*. He was neither elected by the *sangat*, nor appointed by the state or any committee. As he fought for the expansion and consolidation of the Punjab state, under Ranjit Singh, and refused to draw any salary from the government, he was accepted as custodian of the *Akal*

Mr Gopal Singh is the first ever translator of the *Guru Granth Sahib* into English and he is author of several other books like "A History Of The Sikh People" and "The Religion Of The Sikhs"

patiently waited for them and they did come back, full of remorse, and died fighting for his cause later at Mukatsar!

The word *tankhaiya* began to be used by the Sikh devout against those who took wages (*tankhwah*) from the later Moghals, against whom the whole Sikh community had risen in revolt. Later, the word signified one who had broken a Sikh vow by forswearing the Sikh symbols or by committing any other of the five *kurehts* (deeds of misconduct), like smoking. In fact, the *gurus*, including the Tenth Master, have left no consolidated code of conduct for the Sikhs. Not even a definition of who a Sikh, or a Khalsa, is except that "he who is pure of heart, compassionate, devotee of the one God, shorn of superstitions of all kinds and who treats all humanity as one", is a Khalsa. (Guru Gobind Singh: 33 Swayyas).

The *rahitnamas* (Sikh codes of conduct), were all written out by the Sikhs after the demise of the Last Guru and do not tally one with the other, except in some basics. That is why the Gurdwara Act, 1925, defined the Sikh as "one who believes in the ten Sikh gurus and the *Guru Granth Sahib* and has no other religion." The *sahaidgharis*

did throughout their history is quite incompatible with what some of them are doing now.

Destructive Path

In view of what I have said above, will it not be right for me to ask in all humility: "Oh, Sikh 'leaders' and 'opinion-makers', do not destroy Sikhism or its magnificent institutions by misinterpreting your religious ethos. Yours is a message for all humanity. Do not limit it to a small coterie, nor distort it for petty and temporary political gains. From what dizzy heights of glory and highest repute, you have reduced us to a small insignificant minority always on the defensive, confused, demoralised and without a present or a future. Fear the Guru and God. For, his nemesis for sure will overtake you, if you will not reform for sure will overtake you, if you will not reform your ways. Our gurdwaras, to which Hindus and Sikhs repaired each day, in their thousands are being deserted. Punjab's economy and polity are in a shambles, and our religious identity has become a symbol not of chivalry and patriotism as of yore but of dread and destruction. You said you were fighting for the preservation of Sikh identity. The path you have chosen will destroy it.

A Path Of Destruction

By GOPAL SINGH

FOR the last four years, the Sikhs have been in the news due to the agitation whipped up by certain interested parties in Punjab. The reasons were mainly economic and political. But these have been mixed up with the Sikh religion. Suddenly, all sorts of experts in Sikhism have sprung up to give us all sorts of interpretations of Sikhism, its doctrines, institutions and historical precedents. As most of them are wrong, I, as a historian and theologian of some standing, wish to correct them.

First, the *Akal Takhat*. It was built by the Sixth Sikh Guru, Hari-Gobind, in 1606, and was called *akal bunga* (the abode of the immortal). The word *takhat* was used in the post-Guru period, not even at the time of the Tenth master, who never visited it. Moreover, it was never made a living abode even of the Sixth Guru himself. He lived about six miles away at Chherata Sahib and fought his battles with Shah-jahan from a mud fort called Lohgarh which he had built about three miles away. No guru or Sikh here—Banda Bahadur or Ranjit Singh, or any of the Sikh *misals* at any time, used the *Akal Takhat* as a fighting ground. Even during the Akali movement of 1920s, though the *satyagrahi jathas* started out from the *Akal Takhat*, no one was allowed either to stock arms there, or find shelter after committing a crime outside.

The appointment of a pious, faithful of character, learned in Sikh lore, salaried *jathedar* of the *Akal Takhat* (and other two *takhats* within Punjab) is a twentieth century innovation of the Akali movement of the twenties. The Gurdwara Act, 1925, makes a mention of it for the first time in our history—an elected body, called the SGPC, appointing them as custodians of the three *takhats*. The *jathedars* of the two other *takhats* at Patna Sahib and Nanded Sahib are appointed by the local *sangats*. But no extra-religious authority has been vested in them by the act. If the management of the SGPC or the Akali Dal would take their political or religio-political complaints to them for adjudication, there is no precedent for it either in Sikh history or scriptures. It is also not a part of the Gurdwara Act, either which enunciates their purely religious duties.

Unique Phenomenon

To call them Sikh high priests is again a misnomer. There is no hereditary priestly class among the Sikhs. Any householder, man or woman, can be a priest and abandon his or her priesthood at any time. He or she could be engaged in any other profession as well simultaneously, could sing at the temple or be the custodian of the book. Paid employees are kept these days for more important gurdwaras, but they do not, nor are authorised to adjudicate on any issue, except interpret the holy book, the *Guru Granth Sahib*.

It will be of interest to note that after the Sixth Guru, the four following gurus never visited the *Akal Takhat*, or even the Golden Temple, which, both, remained in the hereditary custody of the discarded and hostile relations of the Sixth Guru. They did not even let the

Takhat to provide him with the wherewithals for himself as well as his irregular Akali troops. But he never issued any *hukamnama*, nor interfered in the working of the state. He is said to have awarded a mild rebuke publicly to Maharaja Ranjit Singh not for any acts of the state, but laxity in personal morality. (He was living, it is said out of wedlock, with a Muslim dancing girl, Moran by name)! Akali Phoola Singh, as is well-known, died fighting for the state at Nowshera (1823).

In January, 1848, a few Nihangs tried to capture the Golden Temple with guns, but when the Khalsa Durbar, under Maharaj Dalip Singh, sent out a military detachment to arrest and evict them, they surrendered, without firing a shot!

When the British took over in 1849 they appointed their own *sarbarah* (custodian) for both the Golden Temple and the Akal Takhat. This arrangement continued till 1920, when the Akali movement started for the liberation of the gurdwaras and the British-appointed custodians were removed.

Guru's Resolve

A *gurmatta*, literally rendered, means the guru's resolve. The first *gurmatta* was passed in 1748 when the Sikhs, divided into twelve clans or *misals*, and fighting among themselves as much as against the foreign marauders, like Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Abdali, decided, under a powerful leader, Nawab Kapur Singh, to get together at Diwali at the Akal Takhat, and pass a *gurmatta* to jointly attack a common target and share the booty. This force was called Dal Khalsa and divided into two factions—the Taruna Dal (the youth force) and the Buddha Dal (the body of veterans).

At no time, was any *gurmatta* passed against other fellow Sikhs. It was always a common resolve to fight against the common target, who was always a foreign marauder, or his local agent. This system was in vogue only for a very brief period, under the most trying circumstances. Once Ranjit Singh took over, he abolished the *gurmatta* system and substituted it with the cabinet decision. His cabinet was a composite one—his prime minister was a Hindu Dogra and his home minister a Muslim.

At no time was any Sikh excommunicated by the gurus. There is no *hukamnama* of the gurus in which anyone may have been excommunicated except for the *masands* (guru's agents) who, as a class, were abolished by Guru Gobind Singh due to their tyrannous and extortionist ways. With Ram Rai's house, who had set up his *gaddi* at Dehra Dun, the Tenth Guru made up by helping his widow, Punjab Kaur, rescued her authority from her all-powerful and vicious *masands* (deputies).

When 40 Sikhs of Majha defected from Guru Gobind Singh's camp at Anandpur Sahib, in the midst of war, and gave a letter of apostasy *bedawa* to him, the Guru did not excommunicate or denounce them, even though they denounced the Guru and his cause! (*Naa tu sada Guru*). They were not even

(non-baptised Sikhs) are thus a part of the Sikh fraternity. Up to now, in spite of several attempts by Sikh intellectuals, the SGPC has not been able to issue a certified code of Sikh conduct, as there was great difference of opinion among the participants themselves. When we talk, therefore, of Sikh fundamentalism, we do a great disservice to this great catholic, all-inclusive faith.

Sikhism is a unique phenomenon in the history of faiths. It derives its liberal mystic outlook from the Hindu Upnishadic metaphysics which forms its basis. (It is a travesty of all Sikh traditions that a *sarbat khalsa* (the whole Sikh people) can be collected for any purpose by anyone. Of course, all Sikhs gathered at Baisakhi or Diwali for the *Gurus darshan* and later to visit the Golden Temple. But it was the Guru, always nominated by his predecessor, who took the decisions on behalf of the people and laid down the law. Later all the *misal*-leaders got together to fight a common enemy and never against one another. Even this brief tradition of the *sarbat khalsa* was abolished by Ranjit Singh. Thereafter, the *sarbat khalsa* was never called. To call any get-together of the Sikhs convened by anyone a *sarbat khalsa*, is against all Sikh canon. The SGPC, duly elected by the Sikhs, may pronounce judgment on Sikh *rahit-maryada* even though it is elected only by Punjabi Sikhs. But it has no legal or moral authority to direct political or even socio-economic course of the Sikhs, either in Punjab or elsewhere.

The words *miri* and *piri* and *Raj karega Khalsa* have also created much confusion. Guru Hargobind did wear two swords of temporal (*miri*) and religious (*piri*) power. But no other Guru after him did so. Nor did Guru Hargobind or any other Guru after him did so. Nor did Guru Hargobind or any other Guru create a religious or even a secular state in his life time or even fought for it. In fact, the letter of protest that Guru Gobind Singh wrote to Aurangzeb (called "Zafarnama") clearly states that the Guru's fight was for religious liberty for all, and against the irreligious and un-Islamic conduct of Aurangzeb!

Secular State

While Ranjit Singh did create a sovereign state, he made it a secular Punjabi state, and not a Sikh state, though he himself was a devout Sikh.

Raj Karega Khalsa or *Raj bina neh dharam chale hai* were the slogans coined by the 18th century Sikhs in their special circumstances. These are not the utterances of the Tenth Master as is generally believed and advertised.

As for violence being an essential part of the Sikh religious ethos, nothing could be farther from the truth. Were it so, Guru Gobind Singh would have anointed his own *Dasam Granth* (containing mostly war-poetry) as the "guru" after him, and not the *Adi Granth*, every word of which inculcates peace, self-surrender, sacrifice, compassion and forgiveness in the name of the one and only God and the meditation on and utterance of His Name. To fight with arms an enemy of the nation and to offer supreme sacrifice for it, is no one must have faith in another.

Don't Negate History Of Five Centuries

Don't Negate History Of Five Centuries

By GOPAL SINGH

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Communities are bound together by as many inseparable bonds as are Hindus and Sikhs. Both, for instance, believe in *karma* and transmigration and the end of the earthly life as *moksha*. Though rejecting the Hindu pantheon of gods and goddesses and firmly believing in the vedantic ideal of god-realisation through yoga (Bhakti, *gyan* or *karma*, though not hatha yoga), Sikhism seems to have imbibed the very essence of the Hindu spiritual mores. Though highly critical of the ritualistic *karma kanda* and sanctifying secular activity, Sikhism even in its later militant phase always defended, oftentimes with its blood, the Hindu rituals, their preferences and even their prejudices. Guru Tegh Bahadur's sacrifice of his head to protect the sacred thread and the frontal mark of Hindus is inscribed in the psyche and racial memory of both.

Sikhs may not have been the worshippers of the cow, but they have never in their history treated it as less than a sacred animal. Both their empire builders, Banda Bahadur and Maharaja Rajit Singh, banned its slaughter. Both Hindus and Sikhs form one social organism and inter-marriages among the two have been common. It is a fact of common observance that one brother may be a Hindu and another a Sikh, both living under the same roof, and respecting each other's beliefs as no other two religious orders do anywhere else in the world, on such a wide scale. The Hindu law applies equally to the Sikhs. Many of their festivals are common. Our mother-tongue, Punjabi, the common heritage of both, is derived from Sanskrit, and the Sikh names and caste-names most often are interchangeable with those of the Hindus.

Sikh Spirit

In turn, the Hindus (and even the Muslims) of Punjab, have imbibed the Sikh spirit in no uncertain terms, and that is how in their outlook and activities, they are as progressive as the Sikhs. But at no time have the Sikhs imposed their religion or way of life upon others. They have respected the validity of every faith. Says Guru Gobind Singh: "There is no sin worse than that one commits in the name of religion." (pap kare parmarath ko, it papan te sabh pap lajahi).

When Guru Arjun compiled the (Guru) Granth Sahib, he included in it the word of the Hindu bhaktas like Sri Kabir, the worshipper of the absolute, Sri Namdeva, the eulogiser of Sri Krishna and Sri Ravilas, the supreme devotee of Sri Ramchandra, besides, Baba Fariduddin Ganj-i-Shakar, the devout Muslim sufi. And this holy book is revered by the Sikhs all over the world today as the living embodiment of the gurus. Thousands of Hindus visit the Sikh places of pilgrimage every day and vice-versa. All the names sacred to the Hindus for godhead Ram, Murari, Murli Manohar, Girdhari, Prabhu, Ishwar, Parashwar, Onkar) are repeated time and again in the Sikh scriptures.

The Hindu mythological stories like those of Prahlada, Draupadi, Janika, Valmiki, Gautam Rishi, Jurbasa, Dhruva, Gaja, and many others are approvingly quoted in the Sikh scriptures and other spiritual texts. The Sikhs do not believe in god being reincarnated, and yet with that devotion and in what superb forms and sublime poetry does Guru Gobind Singh, the birth-giver of the Khalsa, write out the epics of Ramayana and Mahabharat under the titles of "Ramavtar" and "Krishnavtar".

read. *Sahjdhari* (Hindu in form, Sikh in belief) have always been considered a part of the Khalsa, from the time of Guru Gobind Singh himself, according to his own *Hukamnamas*.

It is again a fact of history that the Hindus remained the backbone of the Sikh struggle for liberation, whether it was under the gurus, or in the post-guru period in the 18th century, when the Sikhs were being hunted like wild animals. Even when Maharaja Ranjit Singh laid the foundation of a Khalsa empire, the Hindu generals, like Diwan Chand, "Zafar Jang", Mohkam Chand, Moti Ram and others made a more significant contribution in the creation and consolidation of this empire. The sacrifices and the integrity of the Hindus governors like Diwan Sawan Mal of Multan and his illustrious son, Diwan Mool Raj, who spearheaded the rebellion against the British in defence of the Khalsa Raj are only recent instances of history.

It would come as a surprise to many to know that two of the conditions which Maharaja Ranjit Singh imposed on Shah Shujah, the then deposed ruler of Afghanistan, before he would help him regain his throne were: (1) cow-killing will be forbidden throughout Afghanistan; and (2) the doors of the Somnath temple, looted eight centuries ago by Mahmud of Ghazni, would be restored to its custodians! Not only did Ranjit Singh cover the Hari Mandir at Amritsar with gold leaf, he gifted away six quintals of gold also for the temples of Banaras. The golden umbrellas at the Jawalamukhi and Kangra temples are also the gifts of Ranjit Singh. The Vishwanath temple at Banaras was repaired through his munificence and the jewel-studded icon there was also financed by him. To rescue the daughter of a Brahmin from the Nawab of Kasur, a bitter battle was fought by the pre-Ranjit Singh dal khalsa, an army of irregulars and over 500 Sikhs lost their lives in this rescue operation, the Nawab of Kasur also falling in the battle.

The whole of India has been our homeland and holyland. Guru Gobind Singh founded two of the Sikh *takhats* (seats of spiritual authority) outside Punjab. The "panj pyaras" came from five different parts of India, most from Hindu pilgrim-stations—Jagan-nath, Puri, Dwaraka, Bidar etc. The word "Punjab" in fact does not occur in the whole of the Guru Granth Sahib, only "Hindustan" does: whatever hurts any part of Hindustan hurts us Sikhs equally, if not more.

Namdhari Movement

The Namdhari movement took a violent turn late in the nineteenth century due to cow-killing having been reintroduced by the British in the holy city of Amritsar. Many Sikhs were blown from the mouth of the cannon for opposing that act of sacrilege. What is happening now in Punjab at the hands supposedly of the few misguided members of the community is, therefore, the total negation of the Sikh religion, tradition and history. However, one should not be surprised if it turns out by and large to be the work of some enemy agents out to disturb the peace and amity in this sensitive border state. It has happened before to provoke Hindus and Muslims against each other. This time it is the Hindus and the Sikhs. But we must not over-react to such mad and downright abominable acts of crazy individuals, smugglers and confirmed criminals.

Sikhs have suffered for centuries, but other community has not. cent of those...

were transported for life were Sikhs. The Ghaddar and the Akali movements and the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy in the early part of this century stirred the whole nation to its depths. The Akali movement was financed and supported by all Hindus, including Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya and Gandhiji. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru even courted arrest at Nabha. The freedom movement under Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru became a national mass upsurge only after the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar. And, it fell again to the lot of the Sikhs to walk out, wholesale, from Pakistan, because they refused to live under a communal dispensation and opted freely for the secular, democratic state of India which they had brought about, alongwith others, with immense sacrifices. History is not witness to a similar instance anywhere else in the world.

The Sikhs did not rest content only with this. Their hard work, resilience, spirit of suffering and sacrifice and their burning desire to better their earthly lives have made the once-deficit East Punjab into the bread-basket of India. It is still the nation's sword arm as was witnessed only recently in 1965 and 1971. One, therefore, can well imagine why the nation's enemies are keen desperately to disturb violently the peace of our most progressive and patriotic state. No Sikh in his senses wants separation from India which is our only homeland and holyland. The sins of the few madcaps should not be tagged on to the whole community which is suffering as much in the Punjab as the Hindus, if not more.

Aggravate Issues

The responsibility for restoring the calm falls on the shoulders of the government, both state and Central. The Hindus must not therefore over-react. Sacred places of both must be protected by both, and religious sentiments of both should be held equally sacred. And, in this, the political parties and news-media of various persuasions must not only condemn such acts of vandalism and murders of the innocents of whatever community, Hindu and Sikhs (which they fortunately have already done), but try also to create an atmosphere in which such mad acts become an impossibility. Grievances, real or imaginary, can be discussed and met or compromised, but the atmosphere of hatred, bigotry, separatism and loose or violent talk must inevitably lead to the disturbance of the peace, no matter what our protestations to the contrary.

Let us all pause and ponder. Talk of retaliation and vicious and provocative writings will only aggravate the issues, to the delight only of our enemies abroad and within. Let us on no account take the law into our own hands or break each others head, and defile our age-old history of togetherness. The present, I firm believe, is only a passing phase and we shall overcome. Terrorism is not confined to our country alone. Let us take some lessons from some mature and older nations, and deal with it without losing our perspective, or nerve. The terrorists are already on the run, and an isolated lot. Let us not encourage them by over-rating their importance and death-deals.

Let us also remember, each one of us, what injunction Guru Gobind Singh gave to his devout disciple, poet Bhai Nandlal, "Khalq khalak ki jan ke, khalq dukhawe nahe, khalq dukhe jba nand ji, khalak kope tahe". "Listen, O Nandlal, all men belong to god, so no one must give pain to another. When men suffer, god's...

Fighting The Head Priests

In Defence Of Politics

By PRAFUL BIDWAI

IN ordering the dissolution of all factions of the Akali Dal and by ex-communicating Mr Surjit Singh Barnala and Mr Rachhpal Singh, the Akal Takht head priest, Darshan Singh Ragi, enunciated, in a manner that is as unprecedented in modern Indian history as it is obnoxious, the doctrine of complete subordination of politics to religion.

The Barnala Akalis have not obliged him so far. However no Akali group or leader has picked the gauntlet thrown down by the Ragi. The text of the letter by 19 MLAs to him only buttresses the point. It is equally remarkable that Mr Barnala chose to use the idiom of the supplicant while pleading with him against being declared a *tankhaiya*. He also roped in the head priests of the Patna and Nanded gurdwaras to back him at the Longowal meeting. He has thus failed to leave the terrain defined by the Ragi. He may have done this for tactical reasons. But then, tactics are important; they define the language of politics and shape the symbols that go with power relationships.

At any rate, no Akali has questioned the fundamental premise on which Ragi based his *hukumnama* none of them has challenged his authority to issue it. The premise is simple: in keeping with the Panthic tradition, the Akal Takht enjoys absolute and unconditional supremacy over the Akali Dal; that the Sikhs can have no space for political activity independent of the Takht's sanction; and that the political system and environment within which the Dal operates are irrelevant to, and in any case must be subordinated to, the larger interests of the Panth as represented by the Takht.

In other words, the gurdwara must prevail over politics and even over the institutions of state. As Mr Amrinder Singh put it: "The Akal Takht is our supreme court". Politics has to derive its legitimacy from and through religion; it has no autonomous justification or independent rationale of its own.

'Supreme Court'

As a statement of the strain relationship between religion and politics, this is surely unique. Religion and politics have often been mixed in independent India in a variety of ways; but never before has the subordination of politics to religion been so abject. Typically, the politics-religion relationship has been expressed more through marginal parties of fanatics or through issue-based, activity (e.g. Babri Masjid-Rama Janmabhoomi), formation of ad hoc action committee, morchas (and of course riots) than through explicitly stated programmes of large political parties. (Witness the programme of the 'unified' Akali Dal which says: "The Khalsa Panth is an independent and separate nation whose political goal is a pre-eminence of the Khalsa".)

Similarly, individual members of the clergy (and sometimes the whole of it) of all religions have played an important role in political groups. But never before has that role acquired such an organised, centralised and institutionalised expression as now. Indeed, the Dal-Takht conflict in evidence in Punjab is the closest this country has come

in recent times to the relationship between the church and the state in medieval Europe—centuries before the birth of modern politics as we know it, indeed before the process of emergence of the nation-state had fully begun.

In Punjab, for the first time in independent India, we are witnessing an open conflict between institutions of temporal and spiritual authority. It can be traced to the combination of Piri and Miri in the same person after the Sixth Guru of the Sikhs and the far-from-complete separation (itself codified as such in the Gurdwara Act of 1925) between the two, achieved earlier the SGPC and hence the clergy that controls the gurdwara has a pervasive influence over the Akali Dal. The relationship between the priesthood and the Akali Dal worked relatively smoothly, although not without conflict, until the rise of Bhindranwale's fundamentalism which threw it into a crisis.

Extremist-Takht Link

To summarise a complex chain of events rather crudely, that crisis has now acquired a full-blown expression, thanks to the split in the Dal, and the virtual takeover of its anti-Barnala factions by the extremists who recently set up the Panthic committee and the head priests. Mr Barnala has thus been pitted against the priests. However, in spite of the high stakes he has in the long run in asserting the pre-eminence, in the affairs of state, of the temporal authority of his party over the so-called head priests, he was chosen not to do so. Mr Barnala has his own compulsions; after all, he is an Akali who remains trapped in what he regards as the Panthic tradition based on the supremacy of the Takht in Sikh politics.

The point is that the rest of the nation has a vital stake in resolving the spiritual-temporal or religion-politics conflict in favour of the second term in each pair. Apart from considerations of the extremist-Takht link, the treatment of separatism and the urgent need to prevent a further degeneration of the situation in Punjab—which are all important—the reason for this is simple: it is critical to the defence of politics itself. For what is involved in the head priests' *hukumnamas* is an assault on politics in all senses of the term, an attack on the notion of politics as an activity that does not need religious sanction.

We are not concerned here with the specificity of the communalism or with understanding whether politics can be and ever have been completely separated from religion and religious sensibilities. The crucial point is that it can never be wholly subordinated to religion, or for that matter anything else, except at the cost of democracy.

Politics in the contemporary era, in particular parliamentary politics, and religion (or religious institutions), are two entirely different systems or streams of activity that operate on two different planes. Their dynamics as well as their points of reference are essentially dissimilar. Politics involves the struggle of groups, classes and individuals to impose their wills upon society in a manner acceptable to it; it is directed outwards; it seeks its sanction from popular choices

which are essentially rational, or at least within the realm of reason, insofar as they relate to the interests of social groups, however these are perceived and articulated.

The world of religion is altogether different. It is essentially inward-looking. Religious sensibilities pertain not to social choices but to individual-spiritual-moral ones. Religious belief, rather faith, derives its justification from God, from the other world.

Democratic politics is about representing the popular will, through delegation or directly. Religion is not. That is why an arbitrarily constituted *sarbat khalsa*—just a gathering of people—is sufficient authority for a religious edict and programme. By contrast, a political party, at least nominally, has a way of consulting its members or constituents and a system of representation to the higher levels in the hierarchy. A *jatha* or mob is fine for a religious group which is necessarily diffuse; a party must have a structure with members and office-bearers, whose authority derives from some notion of election and representation.

Ragi has posed the contrast squarely by pitting religion against politics. He has thrown a challenge. But the challenge also presents secular and democratic groups in the country as a whole an opportunity to launch a campaign in defence of politics. It would be absurd to leave the job to Mr Barnala and his Akalis. It is also not enough to organise all-party meetings in five Punjab towns, as the Centre has decided to do. Even a strong media campaign on religious harmony and national integration will not do.

Religious Group

What is needed most of all is a coherent anti-communal platform on an all-India scale that stands clearly apart from the usual wishy-washy position that talks of religion being good (only its "misinterpretation" being bad) while legitimising its hold over politics. Such a platform must be equally critical of woolly-headed ideas that favour an "honourable" compromise between the Dal and the Takht. Several activities could be organised round such a platform nationally: public education on the origins of democratic politics and the harmful influence of organised religion on society; debates on the demand for banning political activities in religious places and proscribing parties that restrict their membership to the followers of a religion or sect; a campaign against the suppression of individual freedom in the name of religion; and demand for a bill that outlaws the practice of social boycott and ostracisation of religious dissenters.

Only such a campaign can mobilise effective pressure on the government and generate the public opinion and political atmosphere that is needed to discredit communal politics. Those who stand for secular and democratic politics will have only themselves to blame if they miss the opportunity presented by the head priests and the furore and concern about Punjab that their action have raised all over the country.

Playing Communal Politics

Congress Outdoes The BJP

By A. S. ABRAHAM

THE Bharatiya Janata Party, whose national executive has just met and whose plenary spreads over the weekend, must feel crestfallen at the way things are turning out. Just when the country's politics are being polarised on communal lines as perhaps never before since partition, the party is poorly placed to take advantage of it. Notwithstanding its pseudo-ideological contortions ("Gandhian socialism", "integral humanism," and what-have-you), it has aspired to give Indian politics a distinctly and authentically Hindu voice in an environment dominated by the professed Congress ethic of secularism ("professed" is the operative word, especially these days).

Obligated in this environment to function in a roundabout, defensive, even apologetic, fashion (hence the fig-leaf "isms" with which it has from time to time tried to cover its beliefs), it has rarely been able to secure support beyond those, whether Hindus in Jammu or Hindu urban traders, usually regarded as its natural constituents. Worse, whenever the Congress has felt it expedient to bid for the Hindu vote, it has succeeded in attracting BJP supporters to its symbol.

What has latterly happened is that the main arena of politics has moved right, a phenomenon that should in normal conditions please the BJP because that is what it has been working for and would be expected to thrive on. Yet, the party today commands negligible influence. More importantly, it is the Congress which is chiefly responsible for shifting the political agenda rightwards.

Mrs Indira Gandhi's numerous detractors frequently accused her of deliberately postponing a solution to the Punjab dispute because, apprehensive of her electoral grasp weakening, she needed to keep it alive to rally the Hindu majority round her countrywide. The record of negotiations does not suggest that she was so cynically and expediently manipulating events. What can be said is that partly as a result of the repeatedly infructuous talks, the issue loomed larger and larger in national life and the communal temperature was raised. With Operation Blue Star, Mrs Gandhi's assassination, the November anti-Sikh riots and intensifying Sikh terrorism, the communalisation of politics went further.

Assam Agitation

Another contributory factor was the protracted Assam agitation which had a strong communal orientation. The resolution of this conflict through the Assam accord and subsequent assembly elections did not assuage communal sentiments but, at least temporarily, exacerbated them. One consequence was the United Minorities Front and a second was the loss to the Congress of the Muslim and the Hindu vote due to the communal polarisation of the electorate. Since the Congress had previously lost Punjab to the Akalis, the party

Rajiv Gandhi to reassure Haryana that its interests were safe with the Congress. The apprehension that the Congress, having "lost" Punjab and Assam, would "lose" Haryana, the first defeat in the Hindi and Congress heartland, was thus sought to be allayed.

Later, when the Mathew Commission's equivocation put Mr Barnala on the spot in Punjab for not having delivered on the due date (January 26) what the Rajiv-Longowal accord had promised, a second commission was appointed whose very terms of reference ensured that the matter over which Haryana had been so exercised (viz., Abohar and Fazilka) would be resolved to Punjab's satisfaction. Thus, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, in what is becoming his characteristic style, sought to placate both camps. That the most disconcerting outcome of playing communal politics so "even-handedly" has been to drive Hindus and Sikhs even further apart does not appear to trouble the Congress leadership much.

The next panic button was the introduction of the Muslim Women (Protection Of Rights On Divorce) Bill, a measure as strongly supported by conservative Muslim leaders as opposed by progressive Muslim and non-Muslim secular opinion. This was a transparent and clumsy attempt to regain Muslim support after what was seen by Congress leaders as the ominous rejection of the party by Assamese Muslims who had clustered together in the UMF after what they regarded as the Congress "betrayal" of them in the Assam accord.

Hindu Backlash

The fear that what had happened in Assam could happen elsewhere, especially since the killings in Punjab were setting off a Hindu backlash there and general Hindu militancy elsewhere (e.g., the Shiv Senas in Bombay and Jammu and Kashmir), motivated Mr Rajiv Gandhi into seeking to appease the Muslims by throwing his weight behind the Bill. At the same time, in yet another display of "even-handedness", no legal counter-action was taken to prevent the court-ordered unlocking of the temple in Ayodhya where Rama is believed to have been born, but which is also a mosque holy to Muslims. The Vishwa Hindu Parishad, which had obtained a magistrate's order to unlock the temple, had clearly read the ruling party's communal signals right.

Both moves have badly backfired, with the Prime Minister's much-cultivated modern and progressive image besmirched by shabby compromises and with the Congress party internally divided and brought into line only by the crack of the whip. The Arif Mohammed Khan episode, with Mr Rajiv Gandhi and his sidekicks first encouraging Mr Khan's forward-looking dissent and then abandoning him, has been a betrayal of not just an unusually principled politician but of the very rational modernism the Prime Min-

using them for partisan ends. The credibility he has given conservative Muslim leaders like Mr G. M. Banatwalla and Mr Suleiman Sait, while spurning progressive Muslims even within his own party, will have far-reaching consequences.

But all this is small comfort to the BJP. It has been reduced to such near-impotence as to be unable to benefit from a development that would normally have gathered it bountiful support. The transformation from the Jana Sangh into the BJP has not helped it to resolve its identity crisis. It cannot broaden its base for fear of losing its traditional support. Yet, that support is too slender to sustain its larger ambitions. It had sought a way out of the dilemma by joining the opposition agitation in Gujarat in 1974 and then merging itself in the 1977 Janata. But that experiment in *de facto* coalition government was a miserable failure.

New Groups

Nor has it been able to gain from the growing militancy among Hindus. Those in Jammu preferred to back the Congress in 1983, while elsewhere new groups have sprouted out of militant soil: the Shiv Sena in Punjab, the Vishwa Hindu Parishad in U.P., the other Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, the Hindu Front in Kerala where, paradoxically, the RSS has won new members. The BJP's plight was most pitifully illustrated in the 1984 Lok Sabha poll when the Congress so thoroughly succeeded in cashing in on the Hindu sentiment enraged by the events of the second half of that year as to oblige even the RSS to all but overtly support it.

The BJP has veered, too, between going it alone and joining hands with other opposition parties. The latter strategy has had, at best, mixed results. As for going it alone, if at one time the party did feel it was on the upswing, it can hardly do so now. As it happens, neither option is attractive at the moment. The opposition collectively is ineffectual and fragile (witness the farce that was the fourth Janata national convention). Individually, the less said about opposition parties, the better. The glee with which they have welcomed the first signs of rebellion in the ruling party is a reflection of their own inability to influence events. In the divorced Muslim Women's Bill, the Congress gave them an excellent issue to flay it with, but even that has not made them any more effective. It is, on the whole, a depressing prospect. Even the worst Congress blunders do not seem to be able to pull the opposition out of the slough of despondency.

Mr L. K. Advani, the BJP's president-elect, has admitted in a recent interview that "the national opposition parties" have failed to fill the vacuum that the decline of the Congress in the states has created and that regional parties are filling it instead. He has said, too, that "the biggest distortion in contemporary

leadership began to press the panic buttons.

The first button was allowing Mr Bhajan Lal, the Haryana chief minister, to whip up an agitation against the implementation of the Punjab accord on the ground that Haryana was being sold down the river. Even though this protest delayed carrying out the accord and, in so doing, gave Sikh extremists a handy stick to beat the Barnala government with, it was permitted in an attempt by Mr

ister prides himself on embodying and claims to want to usher in.

Once again, what is damaging the country most is the communal fallout from such expedient and amateurish attempts to please first one group and then another; inevitably, politics is being blatantly communalised. Mr Rajiv Gandhi is showing himself to be less interested in healing communal wounds than inflaming them, less interested in ending communal divisions than

politics (is) the Congress' over-concern for the minority bloc votes...which is basically responsible for the precipitating (of the crises) in Assam, Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab." This is not quite true. The biggest distortion in politics today is the polarisation on communal lines, a development for which the Congress bears the heaviest responsibility. But the opposition remains unable to offer an attractive alternative.

service desks whose occupants look up, blinking, like disturbed moles; its carrels of clerks and great mouldering mounds and stacks of files all crumbled at the edges, charred looking, as if rescued from a fire long ago; and withal, the smell of ink, dust and old, old paper. Bureaucratic inertia is a way of life as well as a national problem. Plans and people get lost in the morass. At higher levels, too, the decision-makers are left feeling they are swimming in Custard. Indecision runs as a distinctive thread in India's independent history, and it has always started at the top. Substitute "Secretariat" for Writers Building in Fishlock's description and it will be true of any part of India.

'Dynamic Inaction'

In most other countries, the public, the media, the legislature and the executive government are far more critical of bureaucracy than in India. While in most areas we have become more efficient with time, in bureaucratic performance we have slowed down. Our trains run three times faster now than when the country became independent; government files are moving about five times more slowly than at the time of independence. When the five-day week was introduced last year the *Washington Post* wrote: "Indian civil servants are considered the ultimate paper shufflers. They are sticklers for form, which means they often return papers for minor mistakes. They hate to take action that could get them in trouble. Files get passed from bureaucrat to bureaucrat without a decision being made". India is the world's third largest employer of public servants. No other country spends so much of its GNP to keep so many millions in enforced idleness, so uncomplainingly.

Bureaucrats never had a good press anywhere. In the United States where public servants are much more honest and efficient than in India, there is an enormous literature criticising and making fun of them, their wastefulness and fondness for rules. Typical of the mockery will be the activities of James H. Boren, himself a former public servant. He is the founder and presi-

employees. A foreign visitor arriving at a government office in mid-afternoon walks through empty corridors, peers into unoccupied offices and finally spying a cleaning woman, asks her if anyone works there in the afternoon. She replies "You have asked the wrong question. They don't work in the morning. They don't *come* in the afternoon".

In Cuba an anti-bureaucratic unit was abolished in four months from the time of setting it up because "it had become bogged down in red tape".

Turgut Ozal, Turkey's prime minister once said: "We have too much red tape, even for simple things. For example, it takes six months to get a driving licence. Our bureaucrats ask too many questions. Why does anyone need a complete health certificate just for a driver's licence? For anything you want, they ask for a birth certificate". Unlike Turkey, in India in some places driving licences are delivered at home, even if the person knows no driving.

(To Be Concluded) •

Bureaucracy The World Over

By K.P. JOSEPH

THE Sydney opera house which was estimated to cost Australian dollar 7.20 million finally cost a dollar 10.3 million (Australian dollar 10.2 million) and £ 1.065 million was spent on the Anglo-French Concorde project though the initial estimate was only about £ 150 to £ 170 million. These have been held to be among the great planning disasters of recent times. But a report published by a state government in our country, in March this year, shows that of its 13 major irrigation projects now under execution, five have cost overruns of 1,000 per cent and more, of which three are above 1,500 per cent. A project with 1,506 per cent cost overrun has developed alarming faults and inquiries are in progress. The state government is badly strapped for cash.

This is typical of what is happening in government. We seem to be having a bureaucracy that is totally unaccountable to anyone. Some time back, the chairman of a public sector project remarked on the eve of its commissioning by the President that, if he also declared it closed simultaneously, it will save the taxpayer about Rs 12 crores a year in avoidable loss!

There may be very few countries in the world where the performance of the bureaucracy falls so short of capacities as in India or where it provokes so little public criticism or government disapproval. It has become an accepted fact of life and it is almost obscene to mention the subject. It is true that there are thousands and thousands of able and dedicated government employees in our country. But the vast majority of public servants have become very militant during the last quarter of a century.

Government employees in other countries also fight but they do so for better pay or better working conditions. In India they almost seem to claim a right not to work. No other country has succeeded as we have to enrich the English language with a new word for bureaucratic militancy—*gherao*. It will be a bold chief minister who will dare to inspect the secretariat offices and ask why employees are not coming to work punctually or not working. State government secretariats have become so unmanageable that a quarter of a century back an Andhra Pradesh administrative reforms committee considered but rejected a suggestion to abolish the secretariat altogether!

It will be instructive to know how our bureaucracy strikes a foreigner. Trevor Fishlock, the British journalist, has this to say: "The bureaucracy in India is exalted and wondrous to behold. In commerce it is probably harmless, but in administration the bureaucracy is a sargasso. For a vision of a kind of hell I can think of nothing better than the Writers' Building in Calcutta, with its vast gloomy halls of

dent of the International Association of Professional Bureaucrats dedicated to the principle of "dynamic inaction".

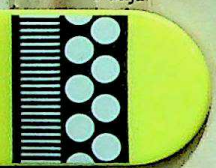
Boren's laws of bureaucracy are when in doubt, mumble; when in trouble, delegate; when in charge, ponder. The organisation's goal is to cut red tape—"lengthwise". Boren unveiled 35 sculptures in Washington D.C. on September 30, 1985 at midnight (the beginning of the fiscal year), inspired by bureaucracy. One of the sculptures represented "the committee", featuring arrows pointing in opposite directions. This illustrated the idea that "nothing is impossible until it is sent to a committee".

According to columnist Jack Anderson "waste" stands for "wisdom, acclaim, and status through expenditure" in Washington. An elephant has been defined as "a mouse built to government specifications". A pig farmer recently complained that government threatened to sell his land because he owed three cents in tax arrears. The Americans once spent \$ 70,000 to study perspiration of Australian aborigines, \$ 84,000 to know why people fall in love, \$ 102,000 to discover if drunken fish were more aggressive than sober fish. Dead men have been summoned by government officials to appear before them. A "grave message" to a dead man ran: "We want to talk to you about a notification in our office that you are deceased. Please let us know if you are".

'Grave Message'

Protesting against the length of bureaucratic regulations, the Bavarian Farmers' Union issued a statement a few years back which said: "God's Ten Commandments contain (in German) 279 words and the American declaration of independence 300. The European community's ordinance on the import of caramel sweets has exactly 25,911."

In Israel, the people and the legislature got so sick of bureaucratic delays that a law was passed which required that all letters to government should be answered in full within three months of receipt. As an Israeli official himself complained: "In Israel you don't just get bad service; it is aggravated by a nasty look from the clerk. May be in another country you would get the same lousy attention—but more politely". In a hearing before the Israeli supreme court, a few years ago, chief justice Sussman fulminated: "No civilised country would tolerate our government administration. Those officials who do not fulfil their tasks should be dismissed. There are officials who sit and do nothing and receive their salaries". William Frankel, the former editor of *Jewish Chronicle* tells this story about Israeli government



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Communal Problem In Jammu

By BALRAJ PURI

THE communal incident in Jammu last February which triggered off an unprecedented backlash in the Kashmir valley, was not just an accident or aberration. The volcano that has now erupted was simmering for a long time.

Since independence, Jammu has a feeling of deprivation since political power was concentrated in the hands of political leaders based in the valley. Whether they were popularly elected leaders or usurpers did not make much difference as far as Jammu was concerned. For the less popular leaders were under greater compulsion to ignore Jammu's urges and interests and to exploit communal and regional sentiments in the valley so as to secure some foot-hold. Perhaps an illusion of Kashmir valley's domination over Jammu was deliberately encouraged to compensate for the former's resentment against domination of New Delhi.

Jammu's protest against its sense of deprivation alternated between regional and communal forms. For on account of the composition of the regions, the communal parties always try to divert the genuine regional urges of Jammu into anti-Kashmiri sentiments which soon get converted into anti-Muslim sentiments.

On the eve of the Nehru-Abdullah agreement on Centre-state relations in July 1952, Nehru after consulting Abdullah conceded the argument for Jammu's autonomy in the Delhi agreement that he signed with him. But the idea was swept aside by the more emotive slogan of *Ek Vidhan, Ek Pradhan, Ek Nishan* demanding abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution to completely merge the state with the Union. It alienated the Muslims of the state, in particular of Kashmir valley with political consequences which are well known. Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, the founder-president of the Bhartiya Jana Sangh which, along with the Jammu Praja Parishad, had launched the merger movement, did revise his stand and agree to accept the Delhi agreement which provided for autonomy of the state within India and of the regions within the state. After his death, the Parishad agitation was formally withdrawn in January 1953 on the assurance of regional autonomy by the Prime Minister of India and the state government. However, the Parishad which later became a part of the Jana Sangh inexplicably changed its stand and again started opposing regional autonomy.

Delhi Agreement

Communalisation of Jammu politics, in fact, suited both sides. It helped one side to divide and rule Jammu while others could further their irredentist designs on the Muslim majority areas of Jammu bordering the valley. It is no accident that the proposal to break Jammu region's identity by merging parts of it with Kashmir region for the purpose of delimitation of constituencies was submitted to the Delimitation Commission by the state government as well as the Jana Sangh.

The movement to promote secularism was thus under constant attack from both sides. Even the National Conference and Jana Sangh could form an alliance to run the Jammu city municipality and senior Jana Sangh leaders gave support to the government during Jammu's regional upsurge of 1978-79. In fact the Kashmiri leadership did not encourage the growth of a regional leadership even within its own party. Mahatma Buddh Singh, whom Sheikh Abdullah used to acknowledge as his spiritual father and a pioneer of the freedom movement in the state, was removed from the presidency of the Jammu provincial National Conference in 1952 after a brief tenure, and accused of being a regionalist.

Whether it was prejudice, ignorance or distrust, Kashmiri leaders sought to rule Jammu through non-political figure-heads. Instead of supporting institutional and constitutional measures for reconciling regional urges, New Delhi often tried to use communal sentiments in Jammu to cut Kashmir leaders to size. Apart from the accumulated sense of humiliation, which for reasons cited above, tended to assume a communal rather than regional form, the process also led to gradual erosion of all parties and leaders. If the BJP lost its credibility due to its opposition to regional autonomy and the close affinity of its leader with the National Conference government, Congress which secured overwhelming electoral support of the region on its promise to protect Jammu's identity lost its credibility even earlier. For even though 24 out of its

26 members in the assembly belonged to Jammu, it offered leadership of the assembly party to a Kashmiri member while leadership of the organisational wing also belonged to the same region. The Congress further lost its relevance by sustaining the Shah government in power but disowning its actions. Farooq's party hardly made any serious effort to come out of its Kashmiri shell.

As a political vacuum engulfed Jammu, the people got more scared by the failure of the administrative and political measures to deal with the activities of the terrorists in Punjab and what were called anti-nationals in Kashmir. The resultant sense of insecurity popularised the idea of privatisation of justice and enforcement of punishment which was used to justify attempts to attack alleged Khalistanis and Pakistanis. Meanwhile, a new generation of Muslims has emerged in Jammu which is not loaded with a sense of guilt for having supported the Pakistan movement before 1947, nor is it silence like the older generation by the memory of partition massacres.

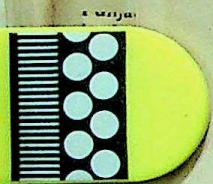
Muslims constitute about 34 per cent of Jammu's population. But their share in regional and state affairs is negligible. According to formation supplied by the government in the state assembly, there are only 21 Jammu Muslims in the total strength of 154 in the state secretariat. Out of the six districts of Jammu, Muslims are in a majority in three districts. It is the Muslim community of the Dogra heartland of Jammu, Udhampur and Kathua which faces peculiar problems. Other Muslims like Gujars, Paharis and Kashmiris have their own problems. But none suffers from so much emotional insecurity as the Muslims of the Dogra heartland do. Some of their grievances also related to the manner in which *Wakfs* funds and property of the Muslim evacuees were squandered. In the absence of a secular platform, the Muslims became more militant and exclusive. By now Jammu was no more immune to communal resurgence than the rest of the country. The trouble ignited by the decision of the district judge to vacate the 36-year-old stay order on the temple-mosque dispute in Ayodhya had its repercussions on Jammu.

Present Trouble

The flash point of the present trouble can be traced to the clash of processions of two communities which surprisingly took place on the same day. The provocation for the clash was said to be the alleged pro-Pakistan slogan raised in a part of the Muslim procession. The allegation, though repeated by the media, was neither confirmed nor contradicted by the government. Given the background of the situation, it is easy to explain the Hindu provocation though it is hard to justify, particularly when none of the victims of the Hindu wrath had participated in any procession.

The police which was around in large number did not cordon or round up the small number of alleged slogan-reisers; nor stop the looting of a Muslim shop. The media did not seek or publicise the views of the leaders of the procession who disowned the slogan. In fact the radio refused to broadcast the statement of prominent leaders of the community which recalled services of the Jammu Muslims to national defence during external aggressions and reiterated their loyalty to the country as an article of faith.

As the chief minister, deputy chief minister and director general police left the scene soon after, administration was leaderless and confused for a few days allowing situation to worsen. As Jammu, an unavoidable bridge between Kashmir and the rest of India, long as the bridge is not properly repaired, feelings of alienation will continue to grow in the crucial valley.



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By A.S. ABRAHAM

ON May 12, Mr Rajiv Gandhi said that the "latest Sri Lanka formulations", devised during negotiations between president Jayewardene and the Indian team headed by Mr P. Chidambaram, were "a marked improvement" on Colombo's earlier position. The Sri Lanka high commissioner in New Delhi, Mr Bernard Tilakaratne, then brought some "clarifications". On May 14, the external affairs minister, Mr P. Shiv Shankar, said that Colombo's proposals were inadequate.

We have been here before. At one moment, there is a flurry of diplomatic to-ing and fro-ing. Some details of what is on the table emerge and expectations are raised—only to collapse immediately after. Even as the Chidambaram team had returned with Colombo's formulations, president Jayewardene, in an interview to the *Sunday Times* (London (May 11) criticised India for supporting the Tamil militants and threatened to "unleash the troops".

Anti-Indian Posters

But while this diplomatic sparring goes on, seemingly endlessly, events appear to be moving to some sort of a climax. The brutal power struggle between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), in which anything between 100 and 200 militants have been killed is, from one standpoint, a boon for the Sri Lanka security forces. On the other hand, since the LTTE is not only the strongest but also the most uncompromising of the insurgent groups, its humbling of the TELO could signal the start of an even bloodier phase in the continuing near-civil war.

In Colombo itself, a bomb exploded on an Air Lanka jet at Katunayake airport, killing 27 people and injuring many others. A Tamil customs officer has admitted placing it on the plane under guerrilla coercion. Another bomb went off in Colombo's central telegraph office and took further lives. The militant group, EROS (Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students), has claimed responsibility.

So far, the militants have been quite scrupulous about not carrying out operations outside the predominantly Tamil northern and eastern provinces and not taking civilian lives indiscriminately. Are some of them erasing the line between a guerrilla struggle and terrorism, between fighting security forces bent on crushing them and killing innocent Sri Lankans—Tamil, Sinhalese or whoever—randomly? Do some of them want to trigger an anti-Tamil slaughter throughout the island, in the manner of 1977 and 1983, in order to force the separatist issue to a blood-soaked denouement?

And what is one to make of the rush of anti-Indian posters in the Jaffna peninsula on the very day the Chidambaram team arrived in Colombo? Since Jaffna is the Tamil heartland and is almost entirely controlled by the militants—Colombo's writ is confined to Jaffna fort—the posters could not have appeared without their knowledge, if not approval. Do these developments indicate a harder line among one or more guerrilla groups, possibly including the LTTE? Are preparations afoot for intensified,

indiscriminate killings throughout Sri Lanka in order to provoke communal riots, a full-scale army operation against Jaffna and a regular civil war?

A senior Sri Lanka government official has said anonymously: "We are expecting the next attacks (by Tamil militants on Colombo) at any time now. The army will go into operation immediately afterwards... You will see the army launch a full-scale operation in northern Jaffna. The build-up there is under way". Travellers coming from Jaffna have confirmed the build-up. Significantly, the Sri Lanka national security minister, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, has not denied it, saying only that it is routine. But he has not ruled out an offensive: "We must see how the situation develops. A military confrontation depends on progress in a political settlement."

President Jayewardene's *Sunday Times* interview strikes no less sombre a note: "After the events of this (i.e. last week, viz., the Air Lanka Tristar and central telegraph office explosions in Colombo), we have a clear decision. We either meet force with force, or we surrender. And we will not surrender". Again, "I have to have a quick solution to this problem now... I must warn everyone that if the proposals (offering a limited degree of federalism for the northern and eastern provinces) are rejected, then we will have no option but to go for a military solution. And when we do that, it is important that you in the west, and India know why we are going to end this thing by force". Since the proposals he is talking about appear to be the very ones New Delhi finds so disappointing as not to be even worth the consideration of Tamil leaders, is Colombo about to cast the die and order an all-out offensive on Jaffna?

It is imperative for New Delhi to act quickly and decisively. A full-scale military attack on the Jaffna peninsula would be intolerable here if for no other reason than that Tamil sentiment would erupt were New Delhi to sit idly by, making fierce exhortations for a peaceful settlement. There is also the question of refugees. Should the Sri Lanka army move into Jaffna, the flight of thousands of its Tamil inhabitants to this country is inevitable. This has always been so in the past and it will doubtless be so this time as well.

Refugee Question

In the wake of the July 1983 anti-Tamil riots and from time to time thereafter as the fighting between the Tamil militants and the Sri Lanka security forces has intensified, 1,25,000 refugees have arrived here. A Sri Lanka offensive would aim at either the total subjugation of the Tamils so that a political solution of Colombo's devising can be imposed on them. Or their virtual extermination should the resistance persist and the Jaffna populace view Sri Lankan troops as an occupation force which the militants must be helped to combat. Or the eviction (naturally, to India) of such a large number of Tamils as to make those left residually behind no more a problem nor the Sri Lanka state.

Since none of these possibilities would be even remotely acceptable to India, it would have no option but to intervene militarily to prevent the Tamils from being slaughtered or

forced into servitude or compelled to seek refuge in India. In that event the "Cyprus solution" Mr Jayewardene is so apprehensive about may materialise, with both Indian Tamils and Sri Lanka Tamils who live in Sinhalese-majority areas becoming vulnerable to Sinhalese fury and in order to escape it migrating *en masse* to the northern and eastern provinces behind protective Indian army lines.

Is New Delhi prepared for something it may have no choice but to undertake and then carry through to the bitter end? The only way this grim scenario can be prevented from becoming reality is for New Delhi to spell out to Colombo in no uncertain terms just what the consequences of an offensive in Jaffna would be. At the same time, it must pressure Colombo into making substantive concessions to Tamil autonomy based on the proposals the Chidambaram team brought back from Colombo. Mr G.K. Reddy, in *The Hindu* (May 10) has outlined them:

Tamil Autonomy

(1) The creation of provincial councils through a constitutional amendment, with an executive council of ministers headed by a chief minister (2) The provincial executive's powers not to be abridged or withdrawn unilaterally by the president unless backed by a two-thirds parliamentary majority (3) The provincial governments to recruit, train and control police constables and inspectors up to non-gazetted level with gazetted officers from the central pool assigned to them only with the chief minister's consent (4) Central police forces in the provinces to be under presidential control, but needing the provincial government's approval for law-and-order duties outside their specified functions (5) Steps to ensure that land allocation in new development areas does not upset the existing ethnic balance in any province (6) Functional co-ordination between the northern and eastern provinces on common matters like education, language, local trade and industrial growth. On this issue, however, Colombo was verbally "not averse" to such "institutional arrangements", but would not commit itself in writing. On law and order, Mr Athulathmudali's premature departure (for London, as it turned out not Israel) prevented the Chidambaram team from returning with anything concrete.

It is Colombo's later "clarifications" of these formulations that New Delhi has found unacceptable. Perhaps Mr Athulathmudali's return had something to do with it. He has the reputation of being a hardliner pressing for a military quick fix. Perhaps Mr Jayewardene has had second thoughts because he is unable to overcome opposition within his cabinet or fears he may alienate the Sinhalese majority to his arch-rival, Mrs Bandaranaike's benefit. Whatever the reason, New Delhi must at once take the initiative lest the present stalemate in negotiations strengthen those in Colombo who want to send the army into Jaffna. The Chidambaram proposals point the way to a feasible *via media* given some flexibility on Colombo's part. The alternative could be civil war, Indian intervention and the jeopardising of Sri Lanka's unity.

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I—Delhi In 21st Century

By PREM SHANKAR JHA

THIS article is being written in the full knowledge that nothing the writer can say will change the course of Delhi's so-called development over the 15 years that remain before the dawn of the 21st century. The juggernaut of contractors, builders, architects and planners, all of whose earnings are pegged directly to the total value of construction will ensure that more and more flyovers, expressways and high-rise buildings will be built, and sewers and pipelines laid. Thus, while our master planners build dream cities on paper, our bureaucrats and their contractor friends are hastening to build a nightmare city on the ground.

Despite this, the attempt must be made to warn the government of the folly of its present course of action. The harbingers of the congested, polluted city of the future are already here: the roads for Faridabad, Gurgaon, Ghaziabad and Sonapat are lined with heaps of Badarpur sand, gravel and stacks of bricks. These bear mute testimony to the buildings that are about to come up. The land as far as the eye can see has been pegged out into building plots. While the planners draw up plans for 40 flyovers, an exquisite waterfront development along the Yamuna, electric trains and buses and elevated expressways, the real city is turning into a single urban sprawl that will stretch from Ballabhgarh, 40 kms south of the city to Rai, 40 kms north of the city, to Ghaziabad 25 kms to the east and an equal distance to the west.

By 2000 AD, more than half of its estimated 20-odd million inhabitants will be living in shanty towns, another quarter will be in unauthorised but essentially middle class colonies, and only the upper 25 per cent will have a legal right to what they own. The poor will be travelling upto two hours to and from work. Delhi will suffer from a serious water shortage, and up to two-thirds of its residents will not enjoy safe sanitation. The air above the city will be more polluted than anything the cities of the west have known. Even today, thanks to its smoke-belching power stations to the use of coal and wood for cooking, and to its poorly maintained buses and trucks, every cubic metre of air in the city is already loaded with 640-1,000 microgrammes of particulate matter, and with toxic gases that have given it one of the highest rates of respiratory disease in the country. What will happen when the population goes up by another 150 per cent, does not bear even thinking about.

Fatal Flaw

It has been suggested times without number, that the money needed for the realisation of the planners' dreams simply does not exist, but this is not correct. Since our rulers live here, since this is the city where they receive foreign dignitaries, and since the latter are unlikely to visit Kanpur or Moradabad, not to mention Bareilly or Vijayawada, this government can spend any amount it chooses on the city of Delhi by diverting funds from other cities and other projects.

This is what it has been doing in the past. In the Sixth Plan, the outlay for Delhi alone far outstripped the total allocation made by the central government for the development of 200 medium sized houses in the country. In the Seventh Plan, while Delhi has been given Rs 2,463 crores,

the rest of the national capital region is having to make do with only Rs 35 crores. Like the judge's black cap these dry statistics serve only to lend a modicum of dignity to the death sentence that has been passed on Delhi. For what the planners and the government do not seem to understand is that the attempt to cater to the anticipated increase in Delhi's population will greatly accelerate the growth of that population.

The reason is that urban development involves a very sharp increase in the pace of construction. And other than agriculture, no economic activity creates as many jobs as the construction industry. The cure will thus not only worsen the disease, but eventually kill the patient.

This is fatal flaw in urban planning that wrecked the first master plan and will surely wreck the second. People gravitate where the jobs are. If the starting point of urban planning is the assumption that the population will grow regardless of what we do, and if the central goal of planning is to meet its needs through a planned creation of urban infrastructure and housing, then the implementation of these plans will create more jobs and ensure an even faster growth of population than the planners had anticipated.

The first draft of the second master plan recognised this after a fashion, for it urged the government to move certain employment intensive activities out of the city, to prevent the opening of more government offices, and to allow only new investment in light industries that are not employment-intensive, within the metropolis.

Megalopolis

But it made the mistake of asking for massive investments in infrastructure at the same time. Thus even if the government were to follow the planners' advice, it would end by pushing out a handful of settled residents of the city, while attracting hordes of new inigrants into it.

The starting point of a feasible plan not only for Delhi but the entire national capital region must be to stop employment generation within the city. Until the government realises this there can be no hope of slowing down its growth, or diverting it elsewhere. Since investment in infrastructure is the first stage of urban development, goal of all planning must be to divert all proposed investments from the Delhi urban area to the ring towns and the other proposed countermagnets in the national capital region.

What is the kind of investment that these towns need most urgently, and will it actually stop the growth of the capital? Anyone who is familiar with the growth of Faridabad or Gurgaon can identify precisely what is missing in these raw new towns. Both have developed in two phases: in the first they were industrial areas to which workers and managers from Delhi commuted. The head offices of nearly all the factories located in them were, and still remain, in Delhi.

In the second phase, which is now well underway, these and other ring towns have become dormitories for people working in Delhi who have been driven further out of the city by rising real estate prices within it. Thus there is now a heavy two-way traffic between the city and the ring towns which is increasingly inte-

grating them into the Capital. This is the genesis of the megalopolis that is now emerging. The draft of the second master plan, like the first, failed to recognise this, and therefore failed to realise that improving urban transport will only bind this mammoth magalopolis ever more tightly into a single-centred city.

The way to prevent this is to endow each of the ring towns with a central business district (CBD) and shopping-cum-recreation areas which are comparable and even superior to the imposing modern business districts of Delhi. But merely planning a business district is not sufficient. Existing companies whose factories are located in the ring towns, and others looking for offices in the capital region must be enticed into going there. The surest way to do this is to create such a vast difference in the cost of office space between the centre of New Delhi and the CBDs of the ringtowns that very few companies will be able to resist the temptation to move. One way of doing this is to allow a high floor-area ratio (the index of built up space to land area) in the new in CBDs, while simultaneously bringing it down to discourage high rise construction in the business districts of the city. This will raise the cost of office space in the city while lowering it in the ring towns far beyond what is warranted by the already huge difference in the price of land.

The other main hurdle to decentralisation, the absence of an efficient communication system, can be met by fully integrating the telecommunications network of the ring towns with that of the Capital. By the same token, expressways and a suburban railway network are needed not within Delhi, but between Delhi and the cities and towns of the national capital region, so that business travel becomes fast and convenient. It is worth remembering that in sharp contrast to commuters, who are forced to travel long distances to and from work for no fault of their own, travel for business does not need to be subsidised.

Main Hurdle

The last essential component in a strategy for containing the growth of Delhi is to put physical limits to the growth of the city itself. The master plan of 1961 had created a green belt around the 109,000 acres earmarked for the city's development whose purpose was not to safeguard the environment—a concern which hardly existed in the late fifties—but to separate Delhi physically from Faridabad, Gurgaon and their associated townships. The planners understood, even if they did not say so explicitly, that the ring towns would never develop an independent identity if they were allowed to merge with Delhi in a vast conurbation with a single centre.

Today it is more necessary than ever before to preserve the sanctity of the green belt, because the junction of Delhi with Badarpur, Faridabad, Ballabhgarh, Gurgaon, Sonapat and Ghaziabad is imminent. Yet most of the 37,500 acres that the draft second master plan wishes to take over for urbanisation lies in this green belt, and the DDA has already begun to build 65 apartments in four complex without the green belt.

(To Be Concluded)

II—A Feasible Plan For Delhi

By PREM SHANKAR JHA

IN an article published yesterday, the writer pointed out that if the government makes the provision of land and urban infrastructure for 13 million persons the starting point of its master plan for Delhi in 2000 AD, then nothing can stop the population far exceeding this already daunting figure. This is because investment in the necessary infrastructure of roads, flyovers, a suburban railway, sewerage, water supply and electricity connections, not to mention housing, will be attracting a flood of migrants from the rural area into Delhi.

As innumerable studies have shown, in India even more than elsewhere, the construction industry serves as the all important transition point through which villagers pass on their way to becoming city dwellers. It is thus both a catalyst and a magnet in the urbanisation process.

Some idea of the numbers who will come into Delhi may be had from the investment that is proposed for the city in the Seventh Plan. If the investment required to create one job in the construction industry is Rs 60,000 (the approximate figure for 1983-84) then the Rs 2,463 crores to be invested during the Seventh Plan in Delhi infrastructure will create at least 400,000 jobs. An equal number of jobs will be created in the housing sector. If even half of these workers get absorbed into other sectors of the economy and each worker has only two dependents, the Seventh Plan will cause an inflow of 0.8 million people into the city. Over and above what the planners may be anticipating.

Even if the real level of plan outlays does not increase in the next two plans, by 2000 AD the attempt to cater to a population of 13 million and add another two-and-a-half million persons to the city's population. This is why the estimates made in 1961 that the city's population would double from 2.3 to about 4.6 million in 1981 turned out to be so wildly wrong (the actual population was 5.7 million).

The starting point of planning for Delhi must therefore be a decision to avoid, at any cost, investments in urban infrastructure designed to cater to a larger population. But is this feasible? Can in-migration be turned off like water from a tap? And will it not be necessary in any case to cater to the natural growth of the city's population?

The answer, quite obviously, is that it is not possible to do the former or curb the latter. All that the best designed policies can hope to do is to bring down the rate of growth of the city's population from an unmanageable 5 per cent a year to a 3 per cent. But this would mean a far more manageable population in 2000 AD of about 1 million people against the 13 million the planners hope for and the 15 million that it may actually.

containing business, recreation and living areas, so that transport between nodes is minimised.

To give the two million or so shanty dwellers 50 square-metre plots of their own on which they can build and progressively improve their homes with access roads, parks and schools, needs only 4000 hectares of land. Most, indeed possibly

all of this land is already occupied by them. Thus what is really needed as a realignment of plots to give clear access routes, and to leave spaces for small local sewers and power and water lines, security of tenure, and access to loans to build their own homes.

Not only will all this cost far less than the construction of major road networks and laying trunk sewers and water mains, and not only will it create for fewer jobs in the city, but its impact on the quality of life of the poor will be infinitely more beneficial. It is worth remembering that infrastructure development only makes it possible for people to build their own homes. It does not provide them with homes. And if an attempt is made to recover some of these infrastructure costs from the home owners (including the cost of land), then nine out of ten people are left out in the cold and develop no stake whatever in the maintenance of an orderly and peaceful urban society.

The housing needs of the salaried middle class are equally urgent. It is one of the many paradoxes of what passes for planning in India, that while industrialisation necessarily leads to the rapid expansion of the "new middle class" of salaried managers, bureaucrats and professionals, none of our housing plans have reflected even the remotest awareness of this particular consequence of economic development.

Thus, archaic and manifestly unfair rent control laws have reduced investment in new housing, and made landlords withdraw even existing houses and flats from the rental market. The Urban Land Ceiling Act has simultaneously choked the supply of land and sent its price up to astronomical levels, making it impossible for all but a few salary-earners to aspire to a home of their own.

So serious is the situation that Bombay, the most industrialised city in the country, to which the new middle class is naturally drawn, has been all-but-closed to job-seekers from other parts of the country. Many companies warn candidates openly that those without homes in Bombay need not apply for the jobs they have advertised, and all companies practice this form of discrimination without the slightest qualm.

While the situation is not quite so grim in Delhi, it is rapidly headed in the same direction. The solution to this problem is to insist that all those who own to-storey houses (the only kind allowed under the present building code) should be allowed, and indeed compelled by a rise in a ground rents to add at least one and preferably two additional floors to their houses. The number of dwelling units can be further increased if the government puts a limit on the size of the new flats, so that each additional floor contains not only

physically separates the city from the ring towns is preserved and indeed reinforced: and if an effort is made to cope with Delhi's inevitable future growth by exploiting its existing infrastructure more fully, and not by developing more land for urbanisation.

(Concluded)

By K.C. KHANNA

New Deal For Public Sector

THE Union government is about to turn a new leaf in the control and direction of the public sector. Reasonable continuity of top management, greater autonomy, renewed emphasis on import substitution and a heightened concern for profitability rather than social objectives will be the principal elements of a new policy package being evolved for state-owned firms. Nothing is likely to change overnight. But within a year many of the 1,000 odd public undertakings may get a new deal and sport a new look.

The changes in the offing, it must be conceded straightaway, are being forced on reluctant politicians and nitpicking bureaucrats by an extraneous factor: the resources crunch. The Union finance minister, Mr V.P. Singh, legitimately takes pride in the fact that he has managed to hit the Seventh Plan target of additional resource mobilisation from personal taxes in the very first year. The yield from such imposts were expected to go up at an annual average rate of 8 per cent during 1980-90 but, thanks to tax cuts combined with the new stress on tax compliance, they have shot up by 43 per cent during 1985-86 itself. Even so, it would be quixotic to think that current revenues can possibly generate enough surpluses to meet the increasing demands of development; willy-nilly, the planners have postulated that a substantial chunk of the requisite resources—an estimated Rs 35,485 crores at 1984-85 prices—will have to be contributed by public enterprises.

Fiscal Reform

The central government has rightly decided that attempts to gear them for the task should be dovetailed, as far as possible, in its other initiatives for fiscal reform. These will include the extension of MODVAT to cover practically all manufactures by April 1987, pre-planning of annual balance of payments budget in March (well before the beginning of the financial year), setting of targets for annual expansion of bank credit and deficit financing at about the same time and evolving a long-term policy on administered prices. All this will directly affect the working—and profitability—of state-owned firms since together they account for nearly two-thirds of industrial production in the organised sector and hold the commanding heights of the economy.

Of the contemplated changes, the new policy for administered prices will be critical in this context. So for the inefficiencies of state-owned firms are hidden from Parliament and the public by the vagaries of "artificial" pricing. Some products and services are deliberately overpriced to generate resources for further investment; others are heavily subsidised. It is nonsense in the circumstances to talk of exposing state-owned firms to internal and external competition in order to get better results. Giants like Indian Oil Corporation, Coal India, the Fertiliser Corporation, the Steel Authority, the ordnance factories and other industrial units engaged in the production of military hardware, have to face bitter or no opposition in the marketplace. So also the railways and a host of service industries or utilities like the airlines, state electricity boards, insurance firms and banks.

A rational price policy for their goods or services should cover their costs and give them a fair return on

investment provided they achieve reasonable norms of capacity utilisation. In a world, it should reward efficiency and expose, if not penalise, sloppiness. This is precisely what the government will be aiming for. But since none in authority has the political nerve to wind up unviable units, the question is whether the country should pay to keep them going through budgetary deficits or preferential pricing or in some other way. With his penchant for open budgeting, Mr V.P. Singh evidently intends to pose these questions for public discussion in a position paper before taking a decision on the issues involved. Logically a new definition of deficit financing (in terms of the expansion of the net bank credit to the central government) will follow. This will do away with the annual exercise in fudging the budgetary figures.

Some of the forward-looking chief executives of state-owned firms have already taken the cue and restructured their organisation to improve productivity and profits. Bharat Heavy Electricals, for instance, has opted for a three-tier organisational structure with 400 odd product managers at the "base" level and a strong business-oriented team in the middle to aid and advise functional directors at the top. Instead of depending mainly on the production of power equipment, it will be diversifying in a big way into the manufacture of military equipment in order to make better use of its foundry and forge. Its target to push up exports, excluding deemed exports, about seven-fold in two years is again meant to utilise idle machines and skills on tap.

Similarly, the Steel Authority has rejected the government's offer of a price hike for steel products and decided to absorb increases in input costs in order to imbue its workforce with a measure of cost-consciousness and technological discipline. Its effort has succeeded up to a point. Last year, costs of coal, railway freight and power tariffs went up. Yet it made a profit of nearly Rs 150 crores during 1985-86 and contributed about Rs 350 crores to its depreciation fund and another Rs 250 crores to the steel development fund. This year its target is to step up this internal cash generation from about Rs 850 crores to Rs 1,000 crores. Once it does so, it will be able to finance the modernisation of its existing five plants from borrowings and suppliers' credits at home and abroad without leaning too heavily on budgetary support. Its objective is to increase labour productivity from around 55 tonnes per employee to twice as much in five years.

Yawning Gap

The health of the Indian engineering industry, however, crucially depends on effective protection against dumping by suppliers overseas. Even the Japanese are aghast at the extent to which the government has opened up the Indian market to imports of certain types of capital goods in the mistaken belief that it will help "modernise" indigenous products and processes. Faced with a yawning trade gap, the Union finance ministry has no doubt cut the foreign exchange outlay for bulk imports in the current year's balance of payments budget by about Rs 2,000 crore. But the "saving" will mainly stem from reduced expenditure on imports of four bulk commodities—petroleum products, fertilisers, edible oils and sugar. Indeed much of it

will be due to the steep fall in the international prices of crude oil and oil products alone even though there will be no decline in volume of petroleum imports. In fact, it is slated to go up by about 6 per cent this year.

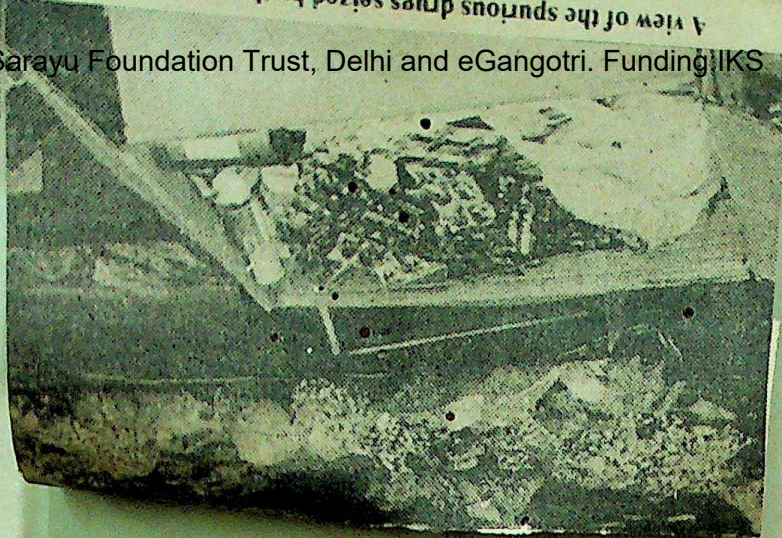
Though some Indian engineering firms are being undercut by subsidised imports, many others are hit ironically by overpriced imports. The foreign suppliers in such cases are able to jack up prices by offering alluring credits. Though the Indian engineering industry, for instance, has the capacity to produce almost all the equipment required for a 1350-tonnes-a-day-ammonia plants, the import content of a six fertiliser plants being built along the route of the H-B-J gas pipeline will range from 30 to 40 per cent. Similarly, Bharat Heavy Electricals has the capacity to build 5,000 MW of power equipment every year but nearly 70 per cent of its capacity for the construction of hydro stations is lying idle while orders for such equipment are being merrily placed abroad. The record of the utilities is bad enough in this respect but that of public or private undertakings which are putting up captive power plants, is truly scandalous.

What is more, the attractions of foreign aid packages to cover such imports is usually an optical illusion. Typically, the grant from the donor-country amounts to about 25 per cent of the foreign exchange cost of a major project; the balance is taken care of by a mix of suppliers and bank credits. But in all such cases the price of foreign equipment is artificially hiked by more than 25 per cent; again and again this has been brought home to the authorities when they have tried to purchase the same equipment after floating international tenders. Nor are commercial credits from the suppliers or foreign banks by any means cheap; tied to yen or DM, a loan nominally at 6 per cent interest costs anything between twice and thrice this rate when appreciation of that currency vis-a-vis the rupee is taken into account.

Strong Pressure

The government cannot possibly put the clock back. But for the future, it is facing strong pressure from its own advisers and heads of public undertakings to stop the flow of engineering imports. The machinery of the directorate-general of technical development, which is expected to clear proposals for purchases overseas from the indigenous angle, has been in disuse for some time. It is being reactivated.

Above all, the Prime Minister's statement that chief executives and functional directors of state-owned undertakings will have an assured tenure of five years (subject to superannuation and three months' notice of termination of service for poor performers) is a recognition, albeit belated, that they cannot give of their best if they are kept on a short leash. The two-year review of their record at various levels right up to the appointments committee of the cabinet will thus be done away with. Besides, the role of the administrative ministries will be abridged so that they do not usurp the functions of the managers in day-to-day administration of the undertakings in their charge. This will hopefully enable the chief executives to set targets for improving efficiency and upgrading technology in a long time-frame with greater confidence.



Urban Density

Can 11 million people be accommodated within the present limits of the city? The answer, in brief, is that they can, but only if our concept of the city itself is altered radically. Today Delhi with its huge parks and still empty spaces holds about 6.5 million people. This gives an average urban density of 150 per hectare. To hold 11 million people, the urban density will have to rise to about 240 per hectare.

This will make Delhi a densely populated but not overcrowded city. By contrast Bombay, which is genuinely overcrowded and an average urban density of 438 per hectare in 1981, and is probably approaching 479 today.

The crucial difference between planning to raise the density of the existing city and planning to extend the city to cover 35 per cent more land than it already occupies, is that the former can be done with very little additional infrastructure while the latter cannot. Throughout the 44,000 hectares within the present city limits, most of the roads have already been built and the power lines, trunk sewers and water pipes laid. The cost of increasing the capacity of the first, and adding connections to the remainder will be a tiny fraction of the cost of developing green-field sites for urbanisation. It will therefore, create very few jobs.

Once the focus of planning shifts to raising the density of habitation, it will become possible for the government to take up three urgent tasks that it is precluded from doing today by its preoccupation with developing new land. The first is to regularise and improve all the unauthorised shanty colonies that have come up, and to provide sites-and-services housing plots for the poor of the city. The second is to meet the need for housing of the growing number of salaried middle-class families that have neither the capital to buy a flat nor the income to rent one, if any one is willing to let them do so. The third is to complete the development of Delhi as a polynodal city with each "node" containing business, recreation and living areas, so that transport between nodes is minimised.

To give the two million or so shanty dwellers 50 square-metre plots of their own on which they can build and progressively improve their homes with access roads, parks and schools, needs only 4000 hectares of land. Most, indeed possibly

one but two apartments. All in all, this one measure alone will add up to half a million dwelling units to the city's housing stock. Combined with a drastic reform of the city's rent laws, it could meet the needs of the salaried middle class for the rest of this century.

Polynodal Growth

The last requirement is to complete the polynodal development of the city itself. The first master plan had identified 15 new commercial centres around which the rest of the city was to grow. While several of these have come up and become thriving hubs of commerce, they have not fulfilled the main purpose of reducing congestion on the city roads. One reason is the determination of the city authorities to tuck the urban poor away, where the sight of them will not offend the eyes of visiting foreign dignitaries, and of the new merantile bourgeoisie that has made its home in the capital. Thus while the rich travel to work in as little as five minutes, those among the poor who are not fortunate enough to work for the government travel for nearly an hour in each direction from colonies like Nand Nagari, 25 kilometres away. What the city needs if each of its nodes is to become more or less self-contained, is low-income housing colonies around each business district.

Since urban densities of 600 to 700 per hectare are normal in sites-and-services colonies, not much land is needed for this, and what is not already available can easily be carved out of the huge and sparsely used parks that stud the capital. The city that will emerge from such a restructuring will be less middle-class, and less European. But it will also be less of a sham, for it will reflect more truly the average income of the people and the problems that the country faces.

To sum up therefore, Delhi can be saved if at least two thirds of the sums earmarked for the development of its infrastructure over the next fifteen years are spent instead on developing the 18 ring and counter-magnet towns of the national capital region; if the green belt that physically separates the city from the ring towns is preserved and indeed reinforced; and if an effort is made to cope with Delhi's inevitable future growth by exploiting its existing infrastructure more fully, and not by developing more land for urbanisation.

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By ALAN TREVITHICK

New Age in Indo-U.S. Ties

MEDIA pundits in both India and the U.S. have, for some time now, been declaring the advent of a new age in Indo-U.S. relationships. Whether or not this new age is to survive past a few special exhibits and one-time technology deals will depend on how thoroughly certain long-standing misapprehensions on either side have been dispelled.

In the following essays, I would like to examine a few areas, some of obviously great importance, others less so, where such misapprehensions may threaten, and new understandings may promote, the growth of healthy Indo-U.S. ties. Not intended to be comprehensive, these represent my personal views as an academic observer of India, and as a resident in New Delhi these last six months.

Outside of a tiny group of Indophile *cognoscenti*, Americans have long held, broadly speaking, only one of two attitudes towards India and things Indian. The first is, in fact, a species of non-attitude, and those who hold it are simply and contentedly unaware of India, of India's history and civilisation, unaware of its role in world affairs. The second attitude has been that India constitutes an archetypical sink of poverty—the symbol and reality of under-development.

To some unmeasurable extent, the various activities associated with the *Festival Of India* can be expected to have introduced some Americans to India as an ancient, diverse and enduring culture. Unfortunately, it remains to be seen that such an attitude is not entirely compatible with a continuing conviction that India is, by nature, a land of poverty and stagnation.

The correction of this attitude cannot, of course, proceed from a false denial of continued poverty in substantial segments of India's vast population. Nevertheless, serious efforts should be made to balance this image which, if it is held to be the sole reality of today's India, cannot but obscure her role as a major industrial power, an energetic agricultural producer, a potent military presence and a vital inspiration for many in the non-aligned developing world.

New Realities

I have heard several prominent western Indologists downplay my notion that a balanced and realistic view of modern India has yet to emerge in the U.S. imagination. Their idea is that the many Indian scientists, technologists and businessmen practicing abroad have forced Americans, and other westerners, to realise that the Indian nation is capable of undertaking any modern task. Yet, I would argue, in many American eyes at least, this phenomenon may well present a countervailing image of India as a land which offers few or no modern sectors which are capable of absorbing indigenous talent.

Public opinion is often sluggish in accepting new realities. Thus, even as many non-resident Indians turn their eyes towards home and the new opportunities which beckon there, we should all be prepared to face the old and stubborn prejudice that India is a nation where no serious effort at modernisation may thrive. Unchecked, such prejudices could do incalculable harm to the

This is the first of a three-part article by an American scholar who is currently in India. Mr Alan Trevithick is a Fulbright research fellow for 1985-86.

potential for new and creative co-operative ventures between India and the United States.

I have had personal experience of the stubbornness of this prejudice. I recently underwent a rather complicated surgery in a New Delhi hospital. Many Americans seemed incredulous to hear my report that medical technology available here, and medical treatment, were first class. These same Americans, on the other hand, would show no surprise at all were they to receive top notch medical attention from an Indian physician in the U.S.

In many sections, Indian industry, technology and social services are well up to the mark. In the context of improving Indo-U.S. ties the questions are: (1) What role the U.S. is prepared to play in augmenting new growth in these sectors and, (2) What role it will be allowed or encouraged to play. I am concerned that the answers to these questions might be obscured or delayed by a continuing notion, not that Indians are incapable of acquiring and using new skills, but that India herself is incapable of utilising such skills.

Political Tools

Whether this latter notion lives or dies in the United States will, in my view, be greatly influenced by the Indian and U.S. responses to the Bhopal/UCC tragedy. I am not here referring to the questions of what substantive or punitive damages will or should be awarded to the victims. We must look beyond this, to a lingering suspicion in many American minds—not in my opinion entirely unjustified—that the benefits of multi-national corporate enterprise in India can only be as extensive as are Indian standards and enforcement procedures in matters of public safety and pollution control.

Here it is India that must accept the challenge. The U.S. is mercilessly caricatured by Indian, and indeed by most third world, intellectuals, as the cradle of craven and heartless industrial capitalism. And yet, our industrial standards and the enforcement apparatus that backs these standards, are incontrovertible testimony to the fact that Americans do not expect altruism to flow freely and unsolicited from the private sector. We have known, at least since Theodore Roosevelt's times, that the industrial entrepreneur, vital though he is to our economic health, is unlikely to be at the same time the complete humanitarian.

In short, the current mood encourages the hope that the U.S. might help to facilitate a transfer of technology that is vital to the continued growth of Indian industry: only the Indian political process can ensure that such technology is conscientiously, safely and efficiently applied. It seems to me that India has the appropriate political tools with which to accomplish this task and I hope that she will wield them vigorously. She certainly does not lack in the necessary managerial talent. But only enforceable industrial standards will meet the situation.

Pious sermonising about the bloody-mindedness of multi-nationals and the alleged role of the U.S. in fueling industrial avarice—and this is a major sport of many in the Indian intelligentsia—will do nothing to prevent future Bhopals from happening.

When an American's hand is extended in India it is not infrequently identified as that very famous foreign appendage so often invoked in times of trouble. As a private U.S. citizen, I would like to say a few words about some of the alleged U.S. digits in the loathsome paw. Many U.S. citizens, myself included, have been critical of U.S. policy in South Asia, and there is currently a lively debate about our proper role in the sub-continent. About this, being no spokesman, official or otherwise, for current U.S. policy, I wish to say nothing. I will, however, express my hearty agreement with Dr Galbraith's recently expressed view that intelligence activities, if carried out at all, might as well be carried out in full public sight.

There is, in many Indian minds, a stubborn streak of distrust towards the U.S., although towards American individuals I have found, overwhelmingly, little about affection—and I hope that Indians have found this affection to be reciprocal. Nevertheless, the distrust to which I refer persists, and only a fool would pretend that there is no genuine history behind it.

In spite of this, I wish to suggest that the notion of the "foreign hand" is entirely too popular among all classes in India. After the recent and tragic Siddharth Hotel fire, for instance, several of my neighbours expressed their conviction that it was clearly the work of foreign arsonists. Many Americans regard this as rather jumpy behaviour.

It can fairly be argued the Americans have no business to take a holier-than-thou attitude in these matters: America has seen its share of moments when the cry of "outside agitator" has sounded in a near hysterical fashion. It is perhaps only human nature to seek an outside cause for internal ailments. There are moments when only an outsider, real or imagined, can promote internal unity.

Internal Unity

Having said this, it is still irksome to see how often, in India, the most local disputes, and those with the most clearly indigenous roots, are attributed the evil machinations of unidentified outsiders. And it is doubly irksome, to American friends of India, when the mounting up of such attributions creates artificial barriers between our two countries.

Aside from regular old spies, missionaries, members of the press corps and academics are all, at times, fair game in the hunt for the "foreign hand." I don't generally hob-nob with missionaries, but such of their ilk as I have met some long ago to have jettisoned the more medieval aspects of evangelical zeal and have spent their careers in wholly commendable, and highly visible, social services such as medical education and agricultural research. Lousy James Bond candidates, most of them.

(To Be Continued)

AS regards the press, the U.S. news media are second to none in their consistent adversarial relationships with whatever the prevailing U.S. regime. It was not for nothing that former president Nixon, the latest of our presidents to have displayed genuinely authoritarian ambitions, once wistfully remarked that the Soviets didn't have to put up with mobs of pestering newsmen. I can assure my readers that, upon hearing an Indian assert that U.S. journalists are agents of the U.S. government, virtually any American politician or bureaucrat would give forth with bitter and mirthless laughter.

I can speak about the academic community from first hand experience. The ministry of education keeps rather a lengthy list of subjects that are declared off-limits to American and, I imagine, to other non-Indian scholars. Not too long ago, I filed an application for a study of Buddhist pilgrimage traditions in Ladakh. It was turned down as flatly as if I had proposed a study of gun emplacements along the Siachen glacier.

Perhaps my study fell into the proscribed "sensitive border region" category. I must say, though, that this doesn't jibe terrifically well with the fact that Ladakh yearly hosts thousands of unmonitored Indian and western tourists. On two other occasions I have had research applications denied. Both proposals concerned the following "sensitive" subject—the history of the Mahabodhi temple at Bodhi Gaya between the years 1891 and 1956! Nor is my experience unique. At last glance, the most recently rejected U.S. research proposal was entitled "epistemological and ontological aspects of Madhyamika philosophy."

No explanations are ever offered for research visa rejections. One can only suspect that government of India is apt to see the academic glove as veiling the famous foreign hand. Some, perhaps, will never be convinced, but the American academic is about as likely to be involved in covert intelligence work as Mother Theresa is likely to join a punk-rock band. Most academics persist in academia precisely because it is in this context that we feel the most free to express independent opinions and to pursue our notions of valuable research. We are rather unlikely to be agents of anyone's government.

I think that if Indo-U.S. relations are ever to mature to any real depth, a free flow of ideas between the nations must be encouraged and not impeded. There are many thousands of Indian students, and not a few senior Indian academics, in the United States. Indian Ph.D. Theses have been written, in the U.S., on such subjects as high-particle physics, race relations, and the American misadventure in Vietnam. Are these any less "sensitive" than topics routinely rejected by India's ministry of education?

Western Values

In my conversations with Indians from many different professional categories I have encountered not one who is willing to defend the treatment that is not infrequently accorded legitimate American research proposals. Indeed, many have expressed surprise and alarm that government of India would countenance the often arbitrary behaviour of the ministry of education. I must add however, and I say

informed public.

But cultural properties are rarely exported wholesale and unchanged into new markets. In this respect I would agree with Madhu Trehan (of *India Today*) that "The Golden Eye" exhibit may prove to be one of the most enduring and resonant events connected with Festival Of India. "The Golden Eye," staged in New York's Cooper-Hewitt museum, displayed, in great variety, the means whereby traditional Indian crafts could appeal to the most contemporary and even *avant garde* tastes. This should be read as a most promising trend, and one which could invigorate the Indian crafts and provide them with new markets without at the same time denying them their ancient lineage. The demonstration has been made and with Trehan, I hold that the rest is up to tough salesmanship and promotion.

Turning now to the popular visual arts, I was most distressed to find that an Indian acquaintance had seen, of U.S. films, only *Rambo-First Blood*. It seems a shame that, in light of the restricted number of U.S. films available publically in India, such attention would be paid to a movie that most prominently displays one of the least attractive aspects of U.S. society, that is to say, an almost pathological obsession with our loss of self-esteem during the Vietnam war years. Still, everything can't be Walt Disney or Steven Spielberg, and I suppose that if we are to know one another more accurately, it is best to appear as we really are, warts and all.

With reference to the American presence in the Indian entertainment field, I want to leave behind specific cases and concentrate on a certain set of attitudes. Indian intellectual consensus would appear to be that the Indian film industry and, increasingly, Doordarshan, are purveyors of the most socially noxious junk imaginable. The idea is that even the most apparently harmless entertainments carry a sinister sub-theme of materialism and consumerism—always for some reason identified with the west, and often specifically with the U.S. The fear is that this can only raise aspirations among the Indian masses that cannot be fulfilled.

Fashionable Idea

Two points. Most Indians, so far as I am aware, are not, as they are so often portrayed in naive travelogues and holiday brochures, constantly lost in contemplation of the ethereal. Three cheers—why should they be? On the contrary, most Indians are no more or less inclined than anyone else to opt, given the opportunity, for a comfortable and secure standard of living. Seeing such a standard of living displayed on the screen can only, at worst, reinforce a pre-existing inclination. This leads to my second point. There is a fashionable idea about that once upon a time, "the west" invented something called "materialism" and has ever since been exporting to more spiritual lands. Nonsense.

There are many, including many Indians, who rightly regard it as cynical and defeatist to accept the proposition that aspirations, once raised, can never, in India, be fulfilled. What are five-year plans all about? Among other things they have always been instruments for raising the material aspirations of the Indian people. Why should popular entertainment, from whatever

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city lives completely by fantasy and, fantasy providing an episodic shelter from everyday life, provide a demonstration of alternatives and new

My views, and would be the view of means, is that "the people" giving their strong preference to entertainment, however propaganda, however, display sturdy

turn now to the subject but, by way of conclusion: where are all the musicians? Jazz, death is periodically the states, always five, and long ago its Afro-American been adopted and number of non-res. The Brazilians, and the Japanese, to few of the more les, have taken the married it to native idioms. The product e, been returned to

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Some Crucial Questions

By A.S. ABRAHAM

Indo-Pakistani Dialogue

OVER the last few weeks, there has been a great flurry of Indo-Pakistani political and diplomatic activity. Discussions at the highest levels have taken place at regional or global conferences in third countries, senior officials have been confronting long-standing issues, the Pakistani president, General Zia-ul-Haq, has been to New Delhi. Mr Rajiv Gandhi is planning to return the visit, the Union finance minister, Mr V.P. Singh's trip to Pakistan sought (only partially successfully) to break the ice on trade, an agreement has been reached on neither country attacking the other's nuclear facilities, and negotiations on a comprehensive peace and friendship treaty are underway.

But this intensifying Indo-Pakistani exchange has not set Indian misgivings on some crucial questions at rest. The Siachen glacier, where Pakistani and Indian soldiers have clashed, remains an arena of confrontation. Question-marks continue to hang over Pakistan's nuclear capability and intentions. Pakistani doublespeak on Kashmir is disturbing, no less so for being a familiar experience. On the one hand, adherence to the Simla pact, which provides for resolving disputes bilaterally, is reaffirmed. On the other, the Pakistani prime minister, Mr M.K. Junejo, who also heads the formal ruling party, the Pakistan Muslim League, talks of raising Kashmir in global forums. Some reported Pakistani interpretations of the Simla pact as not being incompatible with bringing up bilateral issues internationally have also struck a discordant note. Later Pakistani "clarifications", offered at India's request, that the pact will be honoured in letter and spirit have not quite cleared the air.

Discordant Note

Such unallayed apprehensions, however, do not appear to be deterring New Delhi from energetically pursuing a policy of goodwill toward Pakistan. The perspective, at least in India, is changing, although what is worrying is that it appears to be part of the improvisatoriness that has so far characterised the government's approach towards neighbouring countries. For instance, after alerting the world to Pakistan's nuclear ambitions—Mr Rajiv andhi never failed to raise the question wherever he went in his recent global wanderings—New Delhi is now underplaying the issue. Replying to a question at an Islamabad press conference at the end of his recent visit there, the foreign secretary, Mr Romesh Bhandari, while maintaining that India had yet to be fully convinced that Pakistan had no nuclear weapons programme, said it was "a separate issue" unconnected with the agreement that neither side would attack the other's nuclear facilities. It is a far cry from the assiduousness with which New Delhi sought not so long ago to convince the world that Pakistan was hell-bent on building nuclear weapons and must be stopped in its tracks.

But, beyond demonstrating that the two countries have agreed on a bottom line for methods of resolving their differences on the nuclear question, and to that extent engendering some mutual optimism, there is not much to the agreement on not attacking each other's nuclear fac-

ilities. In a way, it is an agreement on a non-issue for there was never the slightest evidence, foreign disinformation attempts apart, that India was even remotely considering taking out the Pakistani nuclear facility at Kahuta, or the Israel and Iran's Osira reactor in 1981.

Has New Delhi come to feel that its erstwhile protestations were futile and that the sooner it begins to adjust itself to the reality of a (covertly or openly) nuclear Pakistan, the better? At one time, when it was announced that Pakistan was to receive U.S. F-16s, New Delhi had also initially protested long and vigorously on the ground that such sophisticated armament augmented Pakistan's capacity to inflict damage on this country in the event of another conflict. Later, when its objections began to make India look as if it feared Pakistan for having gained a military edge over it, Mr Rajiv Gandhi took to saying, less convincingly, that India's objections sprang not from any such apprehensions but from being compelled to divert scarce developmental resources to keep up militarily with the Pakistani Joneses. Has a similar change of tack, this time much more significant and again favourable to Pakistan, taken place on the matter of Pakistan's nuclear capability and intent?

Domestic Politics

The uncertain grasp, tentativeness and vacillation (consider New Delhi's blow-hot-blow-cold stance on Sri Lanka, too) that appear to impel New Delhi, without a coherent regional strategy informing its actions, give these moves a dubious value. Why is it, by suddenly having so much to do with General Zia, now conferring on him the legitimacy it has all along denied him and which he has hankered after? Has it forgotten that, had it not been for Afghanistan, he would have been unable to survive for so long, much less become crucial to American strategy towards the Soviets in the region. Has it forgotten that Indian subcontinental primacy, secured after 1971 and acknowledged by U.S. administrations thereafter, became again subject to challenge from a Pakistan beefed up economically and militarily by the Reagan administration?

Likewise, the limited political liberalisation in Pakistan, which has naturally won praise from the U.S., has been not a little motivated by General Zia's desire to impress the Reagan administration and the U.S. Congress favourably enough to make them grant it the six-billion-dollar arms and economic aid it is seeking after the present five-year \$3.2 billion assistance programme runs its course in 1987.

For that matter, such Pakistani expectations, however wild—the Reagan administration will be hard put to it to find so much money, even if it wanted to be generous, in view of the domestic Gramm-Rudman legislation mandating automatic Federal spending cuts to reduce the U.S. budget deficit drastically in a short time—are no less important a factor in its readiness to engage in a deepening Indo-Pakistani dialogue. To the degree Islamabad is seen as not only liberalising its domestic politics but also stretching out a friendly hand to its long-time foe, India, its chances of getting a big chunk of American largesse are

brighter.

But while New Delhi cannot be unaware of these factors, it gives the impression of taking both Pakistan's modest internal political liberalisation (which does not diminish General Zia's power in any meaningful way) as well as its apparent keenness on a rapprochement with this country at face value. Has New Delhi concluded that expedient calculations do not entirely explain Pakistani moves on both counts and that it is genuine in its effort to democratise domestically and to promote Indo-Pakistani amity? Does it believe that Pakistan has at last come to realise that good relations with India are necessary for their own sake and for Pakistani stability?

If it has drawn the conclusion that the Pakistani opposition has been unable to prevent General Zia from successfully manipulating the levers of domestic control and demonstrating his staying power to his foreign, especially American, critics and that now he feels secure enough to relax his grip, then it is reading the signals wrong. For the opposition has been severely repressed in every way, such repression being a key element in General Zia's strategy of survival. Despite this, the upsurge in Sind a few years ago revealed the depth and width of non-Punjabi resentment of the regime while, periodically, popular discontent heavily and instantly suppressed, has raised its head in scattered parts of the country. The first post-liberalisation rally of the 11-party movement for the restoration of democracy attracted tens of thousands of supporters in Lahore last week.

Crucial Issues

Far from loosening his hold, General Zia is trying to tighten it by putting the opposition in the unenviable position of either registering formally to be able to contest elections (thus playing the game by his rules) or opting out and paying the price of self-ostracism. So far, only Air-Marshal Asghar Khan's Tehrik-e-Istiqal has agreed to register, with the rest of the MRD deciding to submit party accounts, as required by the new law, but not to register. It is not surprising in these circumstances that Ms Benazir Butto, the leader of the Pakistan People's Party, has appealed to India not to deal with General Zia on the ground that he remains an unrepresentative figure.

New Delhi should also read the appropriate lesson in Pakistan's footdragging on the two crucial issues of bilateralism as the touchstone of Indo-Pakistani dealings, and commitments by both countries not to allow foreign bases on their soil. Both are aimed at ensuring that the sub-continent and the waters around it are free of superpower intrusion. So far, Pakistan is not prepared to go along with this, although it is agreeable to neither country letting its territory be used for the launching of third-party attacks on the other's soil. Pakistan's strategic policy has until now been dictated by its desire to contain India. To that end, it has deliberately courted superpower involvement in the region and has not been willing to accept either New Delhi's assurances of peaceful intent or New Delhi's view that mutual trust is a surer guarantee of sub-continental stability than allying oneself with alien powers.

Birth Of SAARC No Escape From Political Realities

POLITICAL realities stubbornly at last weekend's Dhaka seven-nation summit which launched amidst a fanfare of encomiums, the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC). Article X of the charter, adopted at Dhaka, says: "Bilateral and contentious issues shall be excluded from the deliberations". But these ghosts were not entirely dispelled at the summit. There was a private wrangle between India and Pakistan over mentioning Afghanistan (India won, and it wasn't). There was a snafu over the depiction of maps on special postage stamps meant to mark the occasion. The Pakistanis, according to one report (*Indian Express*, December 10), circulated media handouts setting forth their position on foreign policy issues, including Kashmir, to "perceptible concern from the Indian side".

Some of the speeches at the opening session also betrayed a political intent. While Mr Rajiv Gandhi's address was inoffensively neutral, general Zia-ul-Haq tried to set a cat among the pigeons, albeit one made to look as cuddly as possible. He asked for a collective pledge to renounce the mutual threat or use of force and for measures to ban nuclear weapons. He proposed, too, the reaction of a system of consultation on issues of common concern to SAARC members. While regional co-operation would lead to greater understanding which, in turn, would dissipate mistrust, this process needed to be "assisted by concurrent actions in the political fields".

President Jayewardene had his own axe to grind, however unobtrusive he sought to make it. In shrewdly phrased political *double entendre* he appealed to India, "the largest (of the seven) in every way", to create the trust that was "the first essential need" for regional co-operation. This it should do through "deeds and words".

Mundane Needs

All seven states needed "stability to safeguard" their freedoms. But "terrorist movements have raised their heads among several of our countries. Heads of state and government have been assassinated and violence preached and practised. Their leaders hide under the umbrella of racial and minority discrimination and seek separation". Thus, at one simplistic stroke, were the Punjab and Tamil issues equated. In these conditions, regional co-operation could not be "a fancy intellectual exercise" divorced from mundane needs.

Only king Jigme Singye Wangchuck of Bhutan said in so many words what the Pakistani and Sri Lankan leaders were circumlocutorily implying and what was probably on everyone's minds. It might be neither desirable nor possible, the king said, to limit SAARC discussions to non-political issues, for the region's political climate would cast a long shadow on any such deliberations. In the end, the shape and scope of South Asian regional co-operation would be determined by the political environment.

That is the crux of the matter once the overblown rhetoric and the wishful thinking have been set aside. For SAARC will stand or fall by the degree of political harmony that comes to prevail in the region. Should the region be marked by political discord instead and should that discord grow rather than diminish, it would not be long before the theme of regional co-operation was rejected. Pakistan, it will be

monwealth during a period of monsoons, a model of co-operation. In other words, it studiously avoids the most conspicuously important element defining the region would depend for its success on the compatibility with it of that every element.

Furthermore, this multilateral experiment in goodwill would work or fail according to how good or bad bilateral ties between India and each of the other six countries were. For it is India's relations with them, and thiers with it, that sets the political tone in South Asia. As "the largest in every way", that is inevitable. Without India, SAARC would be a joke. With India, it could survive only as long as the political environment, which is defined by how every country in the region gets on with India, remained congenial.

Realistically speaking, the present political environment in South Asia does not appear to favour an initiative which, in order to succeed, requires the participating nations to bury their heads ostrich-like in the sand in the fond belief that because they cannot or do not wish to see what is troublesome, it no longer exists. SAARC is the expression of a regional ideal, but regional reality exerts contrary pressures. Agreements on water and power are good as far as they go, but they cannot go far enough.

Regional India

In a massively politicised and politically aware area like South Asia, politics is an all-consuming activity for the great bulk of the people. Grave political tensions and upheavals are hardly uncommon—the convulsions of partition, the assassinations at various times of Pakistan, Sri Lankan, Indian and Bangladeshi leaders, the official execution of Zulfikar Bhutto, three major Indo-Pakistani wars, two of them over Kashmir, the 1971 insurrection in Sri Lanka, the emergence of Bangladesh, the discontent in Baluchistan and Sind in Pakistan, Punjab and Assam in India, generally in Nepal and among the Tamils in Sri Lanka. In such a politically-dominated atmosphere, agreement on non-controversial matters, often itself difficult to arrive at because of political factors, can at best only reinforce an otherwise amicable relationship. Where one doesn't exist, however, such agreements can mean little and can come unstuck far more easily than when they are made.

Comparisons with ASEAN, NATO—the EEC or the Warsaw Pact—Comecon are not valid. What binds the constituent states in each of these groupings is, at bottom, a common political objective: in ASEAN's case, the containment of China and communism, in that of NATO-EEC, guaranteeing west European political and economic security, and with the Warsaw Pact-Comecon, the protection of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. In the absence of such a common political goal or motivation, perceived by all members of a group as important enough to override differences among them, voluntary coalitions rarely act cohesively or survive for long, except in a purely nominal sense.

The Arab League, despite putative long-standing Arab unity on the dispute with Israel, has been unable to prevent member-states from going their own way or warring with each other. At separate times, first Egypt and Syria and later Egypt and Libya merged into a large whole. Yet Egypt's bitterest Arab foes today are Syria and Libya, known as reject

the distinguishing mark of the Arab countries to together, it is because the political goal ostensible them is weaker than their fractiousness.

The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the Organisation of American States (OAS) have no more conspicuously failed in creating an overarching unification that is stronger thanceptions of national self-interest. While African states are at their antipathy to South Africa, that has not prevented them from acting divisively against themselves. The fate of the African common market in this respect. Bilateral trade as well as domestic turbulence inhibited the emergence of a more than Pan-African unity.

The conflict between Algeria and Algeria over the Sahara, within the Sudan, Ethiopia, within Chad, backing one of the disputants, between Egypt and Libya, expulsions in Uganda, and playing an interventionist role in toppling Idi Amin 1971 in Uganda still in the conflict show how the common political objective overrides internal divisions. The OAU, for the unity it was set up about.

As for the OAS, the course, the overwhelming dominance of the U.S. OAS other than the U.S., have to on attaining up themselves against the number of economic issues because those part out of their relationship. U.S. in the Falklands war, the U.S. felt at one with But the U.S. which bore relationship" with Bosnia driven to an ambivalence partly by its ties with partly by its membership OAS. On Nicaragua, Salvador, similar tensions the U.S. and the other bers arise. Since the ver the OAS has thanks to preponderance within established, it can have model for other regions.

Laudable Intent

SAARC is an affirmative. Its constituents have themselves to build on what common in the hope of areas of agreement and tation that in time, progressively extended ground will have beneficial effects on the political. As an expression of optimism, it is a laudable. But history and experience tell a different story. The state environment which usually determines the failure of conspicuous regional groupings.

If SAARC member-states that they can negotiate outstanding political issues, allowing their relations to deteriorate, but that and deterioration will be made up for by seeking on power, water, and then they are in the Having left "bilateral" out of serious issues" out of them they must redouble resolve their political For it is on the basis that regional stability own rate will hinge.

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Rama Swarup Espionage Case

Possible Political Calculations

By GIRILAL JAIN

REGARDLESS of whether the Rama Swarup espionage case is *sub judice* or not, it raises certain important political issues which need to be brought into the open so that people are aware of what is happening.

To begin with, it should be plain to anyone who knows anything about the goings-on in New Delhi that this is not an ordinary espionage case in that the intelligence agencies have not suddenly discovered Rama Swarup's activities. They have been fully aware of them as have been many others who have taken the slightest interest in communist and anti-communist front organisations in the country.

Rama Swarup has been a prominent anti-communist for decades and this has helped him attract prominent people "Join the peace movement and see the world," Nehru said in the fifties in criticism of the communist-dominated Peace Council. Rama Swarup provided one of the answers to the council's appeal. Join him and see Taiwan with Hong Kong and Bangkok thrown in, he proclaimed from the house-top.

Some Clues

It is also common knowledge that most of the front organisations, whether communist or anti-communist, have had foreign patrons and that the so-called friendship societies have more often than not been such front organisations. The Union government has on certain occasions encouraged and even helped set up such societies to match similar bodies in the other countries in question.

We had to establish an India-China friendship society, for instance, since the Chinese had set up a China-India friendship society to serve as a platform for making protestations of friendship. But regardless of whether the organisers have been guided by ideological or entrepreneurial considerations—often both factors have been at work—most of them have not been averse to receiving direct or indirect support from the relevant embassy or embassies.

We need not beat our chests or breasts and condemn ourselves for lack of moral values. The story is not very different in most other non-communist countries. Those who wish to promote friendship with India say in the United States would expect some form of assistance from the government of India. The promotion of friendship is no different from promotion of exports. It is a commercial activity. Only being a poor people, our price is rather small. Life in India is cheap so is honour.

The Charge Sheet

All this is not a matter of speculation, certainly not in Rama Swarup's case. He made no secret of his sympathies and activities. It would be a sad commentary on the country's intelligence agencies if they were to claim that they were not cognisant of them. It would be equally extraordinary if they connived at them without some good reasons. We have no evidence in our possession which can enable us to say that if

those who have decided to prosecute Rama Swarup and in the process expose many others to public obloquy, regardless of whether they are guilty or innocent, are not likely to tell us. But the charge sheet provides some clues.

Not to beat about the bush, these clues point to one conclusion. Those who are calling the shots in this connection are out to confirm the impression that the CIA was indeed involved in some way in a conspiracy to kill Indira Gandhi.

I for one have not believed that the CIA was involved in the actual murder of the former Prime Minister. The recently concluded Indira Gandhi murder trial has confirmed me in my view at least to the extent that the prosecution has not produced the smallest shred of evidence to show that she died as a result of a high-level conspiracy in which some foreign agency was involved.

But Indira Gandhi's assassination and a conspiracy to assassinate her are two different propositions. There could have existed a conspiracy involving the CIA which did not come into play because the job was done by someone else. I am not suggesting that such a conspiracy was in fact hatched by the CIA. I am obviously not in a position to opine either way. For the purpose of this discussion, it is also not necessary for me to speculate. For I am only concerned with the above proposition that the intention behind the decision to prosecute Rama Swarup is to confirm the suspicions against the CIA.

Deep Distrust

The clues are, of course, indirect but not all that indirect. Rama Swarup, the charge-sheet alleges, worked for the Taiwanese, Israeli, West German and U.S. agencies; these agencies operated in close co-operation with one another. Rama Swarup got most of his funds from the CIA; that agency was keen to find out what kind of evidence the Thakkar commission had dug up in support of the theory of foreign involvement in plans to murder Indira Gandhi. P.N. Lekhi, counsel for the assassins in the Indira Gandhi trial, was a friend of Rama Swarup and received Rs 20,000 from him which money was provided by the CIA. Other names figure in the chargesheet. But they appear as part of the narration of Rama Swarup's activities. They do not seem to be central to the CBI's purpose, though apparently the CBI and its political bosses do not care if some reputations are ruined.

Clearly it is not for me to say whether or not the charges against Rama Swarup and Lekhi are accurate, that is whether each charge is valid in itself. It is also not for me to say whether or not they are inter-connected. I do not possess the necessary information. But assuming for the sake of argument that the CBI has tied up its case neatly, the case could not have been launched without a political decision by someone at the top, or close to the top, of the present set up in Delhi.

We all know that Indira Gandhi had been highly suspicious of the CIA for years. She had little doubt

quences.

Again, we are not concerned with Mrs Gandhi's calculations and motivations. We are concerned with the fact that despite her deep distrust of the United States in general and the CIA in particular, she found it advisable not to make a reference to them in an official document.

If anything, the new rulers should have been even more cautious unless they have some overriding compulsion. The alternative inference could be that they have acted without sufficient forethought. That, however, appears unlikely. For political bosses in the Union home ministry are not known to be moral crusaders out to establish the reign of righteousness. Indeed, it is difficult to believe that a case of this nature could have been launched without the Prime Minister's consent.

Marked Shift

Mr Rajiv Gandhi's overall approach, it is hard to say, is different from his mother's. Under his stewardship there has taken place a marked shift in India's foreign policy and economic development strategy. The two are inter-linked. A programme of economic liberalisation and modernisation, and strengthening ties with the west, and Japan, similarly wider co-operation with the west and Japan can make sense primarily in the framework of a programme of economic liberalisation and modernisation.

Equally important, the west, especially the United States, has responded to Rajiv Gandhi and his policies, both domestic and foreign, with an enthusiasm which this country has never witnessed ever before. It is a moot point whether or not the Americans have been lyrical about him, because they hope to be able to manipulate him, and whether or not their expectations are justified. But the fact remains that they have been keen on developing the closest possible ties with the Rajiv Gandhi government. They distrusted Indira Gandhi as much as she distrusted them. Indeed, many of the Americans interested in India could not suppress their feeling of relief over her disappearance from the scene. It has been a different story since Rajiv Gandhi's installation as India's Prime Minister.

CIA Activities

The point about all this is that the disclosures, valid or otherwise, about the CIA's long-term activities in India and possible involvement in a conspiracy to assassinate Indira Gandhi have come in this context of a new level of Indo-U.S. understanding and co-operation. That makes it difficult to explain the decision to prosecute Rama Swarup. But the move cannot be *suu generis* and it cannot be explained in terms of what has happened in the past unless the prosecution of Rama Swarup is on a par with raids on business houses, that is unless it is part of a "great cultural revolution" Indian style.

Some possible explanations of themselves. First, some one had



Judicial Panels Galore

Uses, Misuses And Abuses

By **INDER MALHOTRA**

EVERY democratic society has to appoint judicial commissions of inquiry from time to time. But while most countries manage to do so with a due sense of proportion, there the situation seems to have assumed grotesque, and often bizarre, dimensions.

Elsewhere, judicial commissions are set up sparingly and only in cases of proven and specific need, such as alleged breach of security, reform of the police or some other agency, a presidential assassination and so on. Moreover, almost every commission in most foreign countries manages to finish its work within the prescribed time-limit of only a few months and to produce a report so succinct that a moderately literate person can read it in an hour or so. In India, on almost every count, the position has become almost completely topsy-turvy.

In the first place, at any given time there are far too many commissions busy inquiring into or adjudicating far too many matters some at least of which should normally be no business of theirs. Judges, especially those on the verge of retirement, are only too anxious to accept inquiries which they ought to leave well alone. For instance, why should a retired Supreme Court judge be deciding the salaries of working journalists, bank clerks or government officials? Or for that matter, why should high court judges be needed to select petty petroleum dealers? The decline in the quality of judges has accentuated the proclivity to take on trivial and even meaningless tasks.

Even where a commission's assignment may be pertinent it is rarely completed on time. Often the commission's report, when produced following repeated extensions of its tenure, turns out to be useless because it is no longer relevant to the changed situation. For example, an inquiry report on a police strike was once presented when the disgruntled force, having waited for relief for three years, had struck work a second time. And to cap it all, even useful reports are so long-winded and voluminous as to defeat their own purpose by frightening away those inclined to read them.

Ocean Of Verbiage

To illustrate the point, only one of the many available instances should suffice. Mr Justice D.P. Madon produced an excellent report on the unspeakable communal riots at Bhiwandi and Jalgaon in Maharashtra in the early seventies. But, first, like the guy in the famous Mae West song, he took his time writing it. And secondly, he wrote, if you please, no fewer than five volumes. All his sound suggestions were drowned in a vast ocean of verbiage.

All these frailties of the proliferating judicial commissions pale into insignificance, however, compared with the two fatal flaws which have bedevilled the whole system and even exposed judges to ridicule at a time when the country desperately needs a strong and independent judiciary, enjoying the public's respect and support.

The first and the slightly less malodorous malady lies in the government's penchant to palm off to judicial commissions the most important and prickly political problems which ought to be solved politically.

which a halt must be cried without any further delay. Or else the country would buy itself much greater trouble than it is embroiled in already.

Secondly—and even more disastrously—appointments of more and more commissions of inquiry over the years have been politically motivated. Consequently, far from cleansing public life of corruption and abuse of authority, the so-called judicial probes have polluted the atmosphere further.

Is it merely fortuitous that whenever the government changes in New Delhi or a state capital, the villains of yesteryears, duly indicted by judicial commissions, become paragons of virtues and vice versa? Furthermore, fresh commissions are immediately appointed to investigate the conduct of previous rulers. The country must also ask itself, in all honesty, as to why politicians condemned by commissions of inquiry for gross misconduct manage to get re-elected time and again, often with a massive majority of votes?

Not to put any gloss on the ugly state of affairs the bitter truth is that a vicious competition in vindictiveness has gone on in this country ever since the proclamation of the emergency, through the Janata interlude and right across the period that began with Indira Gandhi's return to power in January 1980 and ended with her dastardly assassination four and a half years later. Nor, unfortunately, has the country yet seen the last of this pernicious process.

Pernicious Process

On the contrary, the worst form of squalid vengefulness is still stalking the land. And while a great deal needs to be said on the subject, two other points must first be made.

In the first place due lessons must be learnt from the reasons which rendered the Mathew commission's exertions, such as they were, into a cruel joke. A judge of his eminence and experience ought to have known better even if he had been ill served by those who drafted his terms of reference. Some have accused him of misinterpreting these terms. This may be debatable. But there can be no two opinions that he abdicated his responsibility for long stretches of time and went off to Kerala.

Moreover, no census or fuss of any kind was needed to know that Kandu Khera has been and is a Punjabi-speaking village and, therefore, because of the criterion of contiguity, the Abohar-Fazilka areas could not go to Haryana. In any case, even if Mr Mathew was determined to stage a linguistic census in Kandu Khera the whole operation could have been completed within the first ten days after his appointment. Enough time would thus have been available for cutting the Gordian knot or at least trying to do so before the January 26 deadline. But he chose to prolong the agony and delay his findings until the eleventh hour and fiftyninth minute.

The political and bureaucratic worthies dealing with the Mathew commission also failed to cover themselves with glory. Anticipating his insistence on a linguistic census, they had kept in readiness 1,500 enumerators of the Delhi administration. Were these decision-makers so daft as not to know that Delhi's census was being taken by the Punjab State Museum, Hazratganj, either Punjab or Haryana and therefore vulnerable to the charge of

made is that while norms and standards of both political and judicial behaviour took a nose-dive after the proclamation of the emergency, the disturbing trend had started considerably earlier.

A particularly nasty and notorious example of what had begun to happen even in the late sixties was provided by the Takru commission, appointed to conduct a quick inquiry, lasting no more than six months, into the award of an oil pipeline contract. But being a retired judge, Mr Takru had plenty of time on his hands and it suited him—to put it no more strongly than that—to prolong his probe.

The result was that the Takru commission lasted full seven years, pillorying day after day, one of the finest and most upright civil servants, Mr P.R. Nayak. In the end, nothing whatsoever could be proved against Mr Nayak. But by then he was a broken man.

And this brings us to a current and most disgraceful example of judicial self-seeking through self-perpetuation, and that too, in an utterly unworthy cause. In its shenanigans, the Kudal commission has left the Takru panel flat on the doormat. Even a deadpan narration of events would be enough to underscore how horrifying the situation is.

In February 1982, when Mr Justice Kudal of the Rajasthan high court had about eight months to retire, he was appointed chairman of a commission to inquire into allegations which some Congress M.P.s had been making against the Gandhi Peace Foundation and allied institutions, including AVARD, with which are affiliated 469 small voluntary agencies for rural development. Needless to add that this commission, too, was given a six-month tenure.

All the Gandhians under investigation may not be lily-white innocents. But the cardinal fact is that despite nearly four years of labour, the Kudal commission has not produced a shred of evidence in support of charges of anti-national activities levelled against them. The irony of it all is those Congress M.P.s who had waxed eloquent in the privileged precincts of Parliament have refrained from appearing or even filing affidavits before the commission. Nor has the government lodged even a single complaint with it.

Cardinal Fact

So the Kudal commission on its own has given its findings on 11 "issues" and informed the government that there are a thousand more cases it must look into. Since it took 36 months to pronounce its verdict in 11 cases—which, incidentally, has left the CBI wholly unimpressed—clearly the Kudal commission hopes to remain in business for at least 30 more years.

Meanwhile, pray, what kind of findings has the commission given? That so able and distinguished an editor as Mr George Verghese is not a fit person to get from the Gandhi Peace Foundation a fellowship amounting to a pittance of Rs 2,000 a month? Can there be a lower depth of perversity to which any commission, committee or individual leave alone a judge, descend?

The Gandhian institutions are reported to have beseeched Mr Rajiv Gandhi's government to fix the duration and the direction of the inquiry. But what a few test cases can be disposed of once and for all. They have promised to co-operate in

Bashing The Bureaucracy

Everyone's Favourite Pastime

No wonder then that every conceivable organisation in every nook and corner of the country that can possibly be used for the purpose has been pressed into service. The cabinet secretary, Mr P.K. Kaul, the current headmaster of the civil service, is in Hyderabad "inter-acting" with the trainees ranging in rank from additional secretary to the Union government to the "humble" sub-divisional officer (SDO) in the states. Similar groups are to be found at the Indian Institute of Public Administration and the National Health and Family Planning Institute in New Delhi, the National Academy of Administration at Mussoorie, the Maharashtra government's School for Administration in Pune and so on.

The idea that even senior and experienced civil servants need refresher courses—indeed require to be weeded out if, over the years, they have, in fact deteriorated, as unfortunately does happen sometimes—is a sound one. The situation prevalent hitherto, under which selection for an all-India service becomes an automatic ride on an escalator, is clearly absurd. Nor is it any secret that the author of the present idea is none other than Mr Rajiv Gandhi or else it would not have been carried out with such unusual speed and vigour, considering that the directive was first put on paper at the end of October.

Sound Idea

But that is precisely where the rub lies. In conformity with the politico-bureaucratic culture that has evolved in Delhi over the last decade or so, all concerned rushed in with implementing the directive from the top without giving a moment's thought to defining the training programme's precise objectives, devising the best way to achieve them and mobilising the necessary logistics. The result is that the country is saddled with a classic case of avoidable haste making awful waste.

For one thing, the unrealistic 12-month time-limit has taken its toll. Except for a month-long refresher course for officers of the rank of joint secretary at the Mussoorie Academy, every other course at countless institutions, one of them at Gurgaon, conveniently close to Palam, has been reduced to a laughable duration of five days.

For another—and this is no less important—the content of most of the courses, such as it is, when not wholly irrelevant, leaves much to be desired. Any civil servant of some seniority who requires to be educated, through a 45-minute lecture, in the crucial importance of contraception in this country should have been sacked long ago. But even this is not the programme's worst flaw.

The nub of the problem is that for reasons which hardly need to be spelled out, there is a confusion at the highest decision-making levels in New Delhi between management

and governance. The consequences of this confusion are both widespread and far-reaching. Doubtless, there are areas of administration in which, as in running the Indian branch of a multinational or a big indigenous firm, tasks or targets can be easily defined and the managers told to achieve specific results by specific dates. But such areas are necessarily limited. To govern a country as vast, baffling, diverse and turbulence-prone as India the government's main task is to make policy on a host of increasingly complex issues which is quite a different proposition from management.

Unless this difference is properly grasped, both the top political leadership and the bureaucracy at the highest levels will be at sea. For in making policy, there is no luxury of fixed tasks and fixed schedules. Neither the surrounding security environment nor internal convulsions can be easily controlled.

On both counts evaluations can often differ to the point of being diametrically opposed to each other. Alternatives available to policymakers are unlikely to present easy choices between good and evil. More often than not the choice may have to be made between two evils of almost equal dimensions. Moreover, in a democracy like India's the temptation to sacrifice a situation's imperatives for the sake of political expediency may prove difficult to resist even for the most sagacious of leaders.

Crux Of Matter

All this should be enough to drive home the point that what the Indian bureaucracy, particularly at the highest levels, needs is not a cosmetic training programme but careful nursing back to life from the state of virtual collapse to which it has been reduced by the shattering blows delivered to it over the years.

The story is long and excruciatingly painful. But, for reasons of space, it has to be told tersely. The crux of the matter is that this country, as a matter of deliberate choice, adopted the British pattern of democracy. Under it, the ultimate arbiter of policy is the elected, and therefore changeable, council of ministers. But a permanent and politically impartial bureaucracy not only faithfully carries out the policy but also helps frame it by giving its political masters sound and disinterested advice. It is not merely the right but also the duty of top civil servants to warn their ministers of the dangers of any proposed departure from established norms.

Let us face it, in all honesty, that the transplantation of this tender sapling into the somewhat inhospitable Indian soil was an act of faith. But the great care that Jawaharlal Nehru took of it gave rise to the hope that it might take roots. That, however, was not to be.

The Bakshi-Kairon culture of bureaucracy-bashing through a combination of bullying, blackmail and blandishments that appeared on the scene during the Nehru era itself in states like Kashmir and Punjab soon spread elsewhere. It invaded the Centre in the wake of the first Congress split in 1969 when the likes of the late Mr Lalit Narayan Mishra became wielders of great ministerial power in New Delhi.

The cry of "commitment" became a convenient cover for their dep-

redations which were to be of insignificant, however, emergency.

Far from mending the Janata regime made worse by launching a ve-

In all fairness, however, be wrong to blame the alone. This is so because wily and wilful politicians on the bureaucrats for nefarious designs, there quite a few senior civil too anxious to bend over to his behest.

The story since 1980 is known to need recounting sent is our primary concern here the cardinal fact is of a paradox.

On the one hand, to his Rajiv Gandhi has taken smoothen the bureaucratic feathers. On the other, the downgrading of professional encouraging yes-men and castrating the through constant and transfers persists in Delhi assumed alarming Congress-run states.

This would have been were this the end of the But the worst part of the that the non-Congress have come to power with mandates and with intention of undoing perpetrated by the Congress fact, behaved even ingly.

Even Mr Bansi Lal has not treated his top as rudely and crudely great Mr N.T. Rama humiliating and throwing secretaries whose ad- unpalatable and public- ced as "an act of sab- treason." On a note in a room full of office a file at the education face.

Lowest Depth

The lowest depth reached by Assam's government. After a change that has taken place it was only to be a few bureaucratic heads. But instead of judicial decapitations, a mass place. The number of rank of deputy commissioner superintendent of police who have been summarily hand over charge, were hundred. Lower down the casualties are Every single block officer appointed district ministry has been as-

The most infamous Assam regime, the removal from the post of one of the upright IAS officers, Trivedi, a Punjabi, a Gujarati colleague of one and all for his political partisanship.

Why then has he out and that, too, by desk a slip of paper would not endorse ward to the Centre cabinet's proposal and once detained police, whose dismissal by the Supreme Court reinstated!

An Exercise In Evasion

By S.P. JAIN

THE state of education in our country derives largely from its constant interaction with the state of our society; and so does its quality. Instead of facing this fact squarely, the status paper called "Challenge of Education" tends to skirt around it. Now and then, of course, it tosses up ideas about the "commitment of society's a precondition for the success of any education system, or about the role of education in ushering in "social change and development". But it falls short of integrating these ideas with its recommendations on the future course of education.

Among its numerous objectives, the one the document states most emphatically is the universalisation of primary education by the year 1990. It figures out that of the 64 million children who will fall in the 6-11 age-group during the coming five years, not more than 25 million can be given school education with the existing facilities. The remaining 39 million, therefore, will be offered non-formal education largely with the use of the network of television and radio sets. Also, since the existing relay stations and channels of the official media cannot meet the needs of 39 million non-formal pupils spread all over the country, substantial financial resources will be harnessed to augment these facilities. The strategy is ingenious, even commendable if only it can deliver the goods in our social milieu.

Many educational planners do not find non-formal education "a viable alternative to school education". The document itself acknowledges that there exists no means of knowing "the effectiveness of non-formal education". In the absence of any system of monitoring and evaluating the success of this mode of education, are we in a position to gamble a sizeable chunk of our scant education budget, a measly 3 per cent of the gross national product (the Education Commission had recommended a 6 per cent allocation 20 years ago), on schemes of unproven merit and uncertain promise? And shall it be the wisest thing to do, especially when the country's primary schools are famishing for want of adequate financial support?

Social Context

As of now, 40 per cent of these function without buildings or blackboards, 55 per cent without playgrounds, 60 per cent without drinking water, and 70 per cent without any kind of library facility. Also, over two lakh schools make do with a single teacher for engaging 3 to 4 different classes, and about the same number of our villages (one-fifth of their total number) are still without any school!

More revealing, however, is the fact that the dismal conditions obtaining in most of these primary schools are not the main reason why children opt out or drop out. As a number of studies conducted by the ministry of education indicate, the main reason is the staggering poverty of their families. It invariably compels

them to do sundry jobs for bare survival. It also seems sensible to surmise that the scourge of poverty would also deprive them of watching the TV or listening to the radio. What is more, whereas the drop-out rate of schoolgoing children happens to be above 70 per cent, there shall be no knowing of it in non-formal education system. Shall the educational planners then clear their conscience by telling themselves that the facilities were provided, irrespective of whether these could be made use of or not? In that case, who should we be fooling but ourselves by assuming that the universalisation of primary education stands achieved?

Indeed, it should be more pragmatic to reorient the primary school education itself on priority basis with the specific objective of raling it to the different needs of the children from different regions and of improving its quality; and to initiate non-formal education guardedly and in a phased manner. Universalisation of country's population subsists below the poverty line.

Real Challenge

At the level of secondary education, the social context has again been given a short shrift. The proposal to set up "model schools" in every district of the country is a case in point. The former education minister, Mr K.C. Pant, has eulogised these schools as "a Doon School in every district" but this big leap from one Doon school in the whole country (neither set up nor run by the government, though! to a Doon school in every district seems too ambitious to achieve.

Of course, the best of public schools impart individualised education, offer excellent co-curricular facilities, and instil a sense of self-confidence and perspective in their pupils. But it takes not only generous funding and sound planning but decades of committed teaching and competent administration before some schools earn such a stature. They are few and far between, and take time to come of age. Has the present scheme devised to launch a thousand Doon schools within the Seventh Plan period, ascertained that a correspondingly large number of persons competent to handle the job is available? And what about the inner reserves and resilience which grow in such institutions only with time, and which alone help them to withstand the oppressive pulls and pressures of our body politic?

In the event, the scheme may succeed in setting up a chain of schools with all the trappings of public school education but without much of its substance and quality. Indeed, these institutions, like a large number of so-called public schools (euphemism for commercial ventures) may merely serve the cause of unhealthy elitism and snobbery.

The coarse and vainglorious subculture of this variety of public school education reflects, as the status paper also notes, in its blissful neglect of our "national heritage", let alone any sense of "legitimate pride" in it. Often enough it betrays utter insensitivity towards the present poverty and squalor in the

country. Indeed, a good number of the products of such education acquire merely the skills of manipulation and manoeuvres in the name of learning the virtues of leadership and initiative. Such ideas sidetrack the real challenge which lies in improving and vitalising the government-run and aided schools. After all, despite our having several IITs, reputed medical institutes, and prestigious colleges—all mode institutions—the educational standards are dismal today because the standards in the majority of educational institutions are dismal.

One peculiar problem to which the document could pay serious attention is posed by the brain-drain from the country. After successfully graduating in medicine or engineering, architecture or management, and such other coveted courses, a large number of these qualified people try hard to settle abroad. It is not that opportunities are bleak for them in the country, it is that these are not as rosy as in the west.

In the event, a quarter of the 20,000 doctors produced every year and a sizeable number of others emigrate from the country. Thus the country's cheated of its precious human resources and of the huge sums of money spent on their training. On an average, it spends Rs 3,00,00, on the education of a doctor and Rs 2,00,000 on that of an engineer. Also, larger share (82 per cent) of this money comes from indirect taxes the incidence of which falls heavily on the poor. The least the policy-makers could do in the matter was to recommend effective legislation for recovering the cost incurred on training such individuals before permitting their emigration.

Radical Change

The bane of higher education today, more than most other things, is the high degree of its politicisation. The unscrupulous politicians who make little difference between favouring someone with a permit or a teaching position, the self-seeking bureaucrats and educational administrators who perpetually keep building bridges with the politicians in power, the teacher-politicians who turn oblivious of their commitment to classroom, the militant students who keep mouthing the briefs given by their political mentors are different facets of this malady. It is painfully ironic that these wide-ranging indulgence in blatant self-aggrandisement often frustrate the genuine efforts of their well-intentioned counterparts who have so far saved the system from collapsing altogether.

What compounds this irony is the fact that the poor largely foot the bill for such sickening goings on in the name of higher education even as hardly one per cent of their children in the relevant age group avail of the facility. In any case, the malaise of the politicisation of higher education can only be rooted out if confronted at its sharpest cutting edge. All political parties must be forced if they cannot be persuaded to stay their hand, and the ruling party has to take the initiative for doing so. "Radical change" in education system, so anxiously aimed at in the document, entails determined measures.

Education Warping Students' Minds

By SUNIL DUTT GAUR

ONE may find it difficult to believe that in any classroom below graduate level, more than 70 per cent of those present are absent mentally. But that is a fact. After interviewing a significant number of students, it was found that, even at college level, "mental absenteeism" in class is very common. It is so frequent, especially up to graduate classes, that not only are money and time spent in vain, but the output from education is also far below expectations, at least in non-professional courses. Today, the majority of graduates are full of frustration, anger, anxiety and other nervous problems. Their elders usually complain that they lack moral and ethical values. Should we be content if this is the net result of giving young people 15 years of education?

Quite often in a history class, there are many names and dates that need to be memorised. However, students repeatedly look at their watches. You may find a teacher of English enjoying a poem while the class is asleep. In other classes, some students may prefer to draw funny portraits of their teacher or some other figure. Such instances illustrate mental absenteeism.

Mental Absenteeism

Data collected from 153 college students in various non-technical disciplines revealed that:

— 62 per cent, at the beginning of the lecture, were motivated and listened to it, but, after ten to 15 minutes, they lost interest.

— 14 per cent felt that, often, they did not even know the topic that the teacher was supposed to be teaching and they never listened to him. These students usually fell short of attendance requirements in the teacher's register.

— 24 per cent of the students reported that they listened to the lecturer throughout the lesson.

These observations are based on reports of arts students (B.A. pass and honours courses). Why are they mentally absent? Further probing yielded the following important observations:

A. Need and ambition are important determinants of student performance in the classroom.

B. The student's family background is closely related to his mental state in the classroom.

C. The more students perceive academic activity to be of use in the attainment of their goals, the more serious they are in class.

D. Students tend to miss classes where the teacher practises one-way communication or lacks humour.

How much do attending classes and reading books help in achieving one's goals in life? Most students feel that even if they get first-class marks, it is not necessarily going to give them a good job or happiness in life. Becoming a graduate does not lead them anywhere but in the lurch. So, an average student does not know what his goals are. He becomes a fatalist. Millions of students are expected to study hard and prove their worth without their being any the wiser about where they will end up.

One major problem is that, in most cases, lectures are in the form of All India Radio news bulletins. The teacher talks and the students listen. Even if the teacher makes an effort to get his students to participate, it is usually not successful at the beginning. This is because

expression of their views by students. This results in a kind of fixed student behaviour pattern after school. Inquisitiveness is weakened and there is a mechanical attitude towards lectures. A complete change in teaching at school level is necessary if higher education instruction is to improve.

At college, but more especially at school, very few students are aware of their aptitudes and interests. Most of them let things happen to them as they come. On the other hand, some parents force their will on their children in order to fulfil the dreams that did not come true in their own lives. To help students the government has provided schools with counsellors. However, we should not forget that they are products of the same system. Moreover, each counsellor is attached to many schools with the result that he or she has no time to help students individually. Few schools have proper facilities for aptitude testing. If we want to improve higher education, we must be able to assess the aptitudes and interests of students after they finish their compulsory subjects and help them to choose wisely at the plus-two stage.

Delinking degrees from jobs will definitely improve higher education as most students come to college only to get a degree and not to learn and grow mentally. Young men, of course, want degrees to get jobs while many young women want degrees in the hope of landing a better groom. So delinking degrees is not sufficient, public attitudes must also be changed. The rat-race to get degrees must be stopped and only carefully selected students should be admitted into universities.

The quality of university teachers also ought to be raised. The brightness of a teacher is not solely reflected in his academic record or the number of publications to his credit. In fact, the stipulation of a Ph.D. degree for promotions to certain positions has already caused much harm. Ironically, in a way, there is a race for these degrees for the sake of getting university jobs. The brightness of a teacher is reflected in both his knowledge and his communications skills. When teachers are appointed, hardly any weightage is given to the latter, which is perhaps the most essential element of good teaching.

Delinking Degrees

Teacher dissatisfaction is directly responsible for the deteriorating environment in education. The salaries facilities provided are ridiculous. That is why good students try to get private-sector jobs or go into the upper reaches of the central services. What can be expected of a teacher who has to struggle hard to get out of a crowded DTC bus just before he has to deliver his lecture? What nation-building can be expected from those who can never build their houses to live in? This is why today even teachers are found with banners in their hand and slogans in their mouths.

The national education policy ("Challenge of Education", 1985, page 32) says "... Teachers must thus be accorded an honoured place in society. Their emoluments and other service conditions should be adequate and satisfactory, having regard to their qualifications and responsibility...". But there is a wide gap between policy and reality. Using good adjectives does not make good policy. Soon, we will have a teacher in education that

II—Cadre Versus Nation

By PREM SHANKAR JHA

FROM the very beginning it was clear that a sizeable portion of the Congress Party had a very different view of the political reforms that Mr Gandhi was trying to make. When Mr Ramakrishna Hegde swept back to power in Karnataka a large number of senior Congressmen, especially those from Karnataka, the Congress cadres go even further, and discern a pattern in Karnataka, Punjab, Assam, and the resurgence of the opposition in several other states.

West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh are already lost to the Congress, they maintain. Now Rajiv has "given away" Punjab, Assam and Karnataka. Haryana faces an election soon, and the concessions to Punjab may make the Congress lose Haryana also. Maharashtra is already becoming a marginal state. If there are a few more reverses, as in the Sangli by-election, what will be left of the Congress Party in the states? This question touches deep chords of fear in a large part of the nation's intelligentsia regarding the country's unity.

The fact is that the Congress umbrella has been in tatters for some time now. It is worth remembering that in the 21 by-elections of May 1984, the Congress should rightly be in control and should rightly be the top priority item with our government and it is only in the fitful process of things that our bureaucrats are periodically reminded about this aspect to understand the developments and implement the measures in their respective areas of work.

Secondly, the feeling that there is no commonality at all between running a business enterprise and running the country. Running a country is very much like running the business, of course, at a much bigger scale and obviously needing greater competence. This competence comes from pooling the resources of a large number of administrators in the government. In all advanced countries like the USA, and Western European nations as well as Japan there are frequent interactions with managers of industry joining the government and vice-versa.

Without going into the darkest periods of our national history, it is an established fact that, by and large, Indian bureaucrats have acquitted themselves well. Even the Bakshi-Kairon culture mentioned by Mr Malhotra was very successful in achieving development targets. The fact that these two chief ministers were somewhat tough task masters did not in any way demoralise the bureaucracy in general. Of course, there are always some people who can stand up to pressures and others who can't.

Without any comment on the actions of the new Assam government, or NTR in Andhra, generally, of the Congress governments in the states as well as at the Centre and the bureaucracy have always had in the healthy mutual respects for each other and this is the way it should be.

K.S. KALRA

New Delhi.

Since the alternative, an indefinite postponement of elections, was unthinkable, a Congress defeat was the inevitable price of a return to normality. But many Congress cadres persist in viewing the defeat as another product of Mr Gandhi's naivete, and his hurry to get things

unstated one—Rajiv Gandhi's programme of politico-economic reform. The tax-raids, the reform of direct taxation, and his avowed determination to "break the nexus between politics and vested interests" threatens the link between the party cadres and the powerful intermediate class of owner-manufacturers and traders, that has as readily behind the socialist chant with which judges are routinely pre-lacing their statements, as behind the arbitrary actions of an assistant collector of indirect taxes who does not mind whether a company loses export orders worth hundreds of crores of rupees so long as he can have his way on the assessment of the tax due to the government. Self-righteousness has seeped down to magistrates who gratuitously deny bail to prominent businessmen, and even to tax enforcement officials who rush to the press with defamatory disclosures of tax and foreign exchange "frauds" before anything has been proven, and circumvent bans on such press releases by pressing criminal, instead of civil, charges against the alleged culprits.

The difference between morality and self-righteousness lies in the fact that while both give primacy to means over ends, the moral person does not lose sight of the ends, while the self-righteous person disregards them. It is the increasingly self-righteous actions of Mr Gandhi's government that have aroused profound disquiet even among those who most strongly approve of both the goals that his government is seeking to achieve and by and large, the methods that it is adopting.

The pre-budget price hikes could not have come at a worse time, for they fanned the simmering discontentment of his opponents in the party, and the misgivings of his supporters. But the greatest damage they did was to alienate the public at a time when the government was regularly appealing to it over the heads of its party cadres.

(Concluded)

Tell-Tale Indication

Success will depend very largely on the deliberation and tact with which Mr Gandhi's government moves. So far it has not distinguished itself on either count. If a government seeks to appeal to the nation above the heads of its party, it must above all be seen to be effective. This is where strong doubts have emerged. In 15 months, Mr Gandhi has already had one major and one minor reshuffle of his cabinet. The harm this has done might have been mitigated if the bureaucracy had been given a measure of permanence. But immediately after Mr Gandhi came to power, there was a mini-purge in the bureaucracy in which as many as 28 senior officials of the ranks of additional secretary and secretary were shifted around. Since then the game of musical chairs has continued.

The most tell-tale indication of why things are going wrong is the way the government has launched its tax drive. In this one area, above all, morality has turned into self-righteousness. This is why, having asked taxpayers to come clean, the tax authorities did not wait for them to do so before launching their raids. Unfortunately, self-righteousness is

Sir.—This refers to Mr Inder Malhotra's article "Bashing Bureaucracy" (February 6) and Prof. Nitish De's rejoinder (February 13).

The points raised regarding the one-week programme (for the first time made mandatory for every year of the career) for senior, middle and young IAS officers should be seen in their correct perspective. Possibly it is not realised often enough that a very large number of IAS officers after having left the initial induction course, do not even get an opportunity to go near any training institution. The Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration has been rendering a yeoman's service in running occasional management development programme for a small number every year, but this would have touched only a fringe. Meanwhile, the modern concepts of management applicable to decision making, computer concepts along with hands-on experience, and knowledge of the behavioural and social sciences have increased manifold, to which the country's cream of administrators should have been exposed. It is for the first time that such an attempt is being made. Exposure to new ideas would always be refreshing, particularly to those too long rivetted to the chairs or working in the fields of practice.

As for the vertical integration of different levels of officers, this is a deliberate attempt to let decision-making executives mix with the decision-implementing juniors of their cadre. This is also conducive to breaking down the existing entrenched culture under which a Commissioner of the 1950 batch would seldom sit with his junior colleagues of the 1980 batch, let alone share decision-making concepts and discuss their implementation. That is precisely what is happening in all the institutes now running the one-week programmes.

Many states have already done commendable work in this direction and it is absolutely imperative that one-week forums such as above exist regularly to imbibe learning concepts, exchange notes and pick up new ideas that can be implemented in all other states. Why should we be against such a valuable awareness-creation and sensitisation process?

UTPAL K. BANERJEE

New Delhi.

II

Sir.—Mr Inder Malhotra (February 6) has written a very lucid article on the Indian bureaucracy. But I am afraid he seems to have been carried away by his belief that all politicians are bad and all bureaucrats, the very manifestations of virtue unless of course they are tainted by the former. Unfortunately, the actual position is somewhat different.

In the first place, what is wrong with the government's decision to run a refresher course for all civil servants? There is nothing to laugh at even in the five-day course where relatively new officers can at least be given some orientation about the patterns and programmes of the government. He ridicules the 45 minutes lecture on the importance of birth control measures; perhaps Mr Malhotra forgets that popula-

Rajiv Gandhi's Acid Test

I—Revolt Of The Intermediate Class

By PREM SHANKAR JHA

BY now it must be clear to even the most obtuse of the Prime Minister's advisers that whatever its justification in political terms the decision to raise the issue price of foodgrains, fertilisers and petroleum products in rapid succession just weeks before the budget, was a political blunder.

The practice of announcing administered price hikes first before the budget is, however, anything but new. What is more, except in the case of cooking gas, the increases were in themselves fairly modest—10 per cent in respect of fertilisers after three years, 6 to 7 per cent in those of petroleum products, and 8 to 9 per cent for foodgrains after three and a half years. None of these even equals the real rate of growth of GNP during the same period.

It is also necessary to ask why the anger is focussing on Rajiv Gandhi personally, and not the government as a whole? The short answer is that a large segment of the Congress Party has dissociated itself from the Prime Minister, joined hands in effect with the opposition, posed as champions of the poor, and thereby helped to focus anger on the Prime Minister, and his "inner coterie" of advisers.

Inescapable Truth

No matter how much one may attempt to put a gloss on it, the inescapable truth is that there is a growing resentment within the Congress Party against the Prime Minister. And this is caused not by the price increases, but by the profound change in political alignments that is being brought about by the new government. These changes threaten the very power base of the party cadres.

This resentment must not be allowed to gather momentum. For if it were to do so to the point where it weakens the Prime Minister and forces him to change his basic policies, the nation will be the loser. Not only can it not afford a policy of drift at the Centre, it cannot even afford a return to the old style of Congress politics that flourished under Mrs Gandhi.

Even a cursory glance at the government's record in the 15 months reveals that the discontent can have very little to do with the success or a failure of Mr Gandhi's government in tackling the major problems that the country faces. In fact, a strong case can be made for the proposition that the party is disenchanted with Mr Gandhi's leadership precisely because he has addressed himself almost exclusively to the concerns of the nation, and not to those of the Congress cadres.

Mr Gandhi heralded the change that his government intended to bring about in the style and content of Indian politics within days of his party's stunning victory in the December 1984 elections, by refusing to allow the Congress Party in Karnataka to form a defectors' government after the Janata government, under Mr R.K. Hegde, resigned. He refused even to allow President's rule in the state, and insisted that Mr Hegde should continue as the caretaker chief minister till the next election.

In the Indian context this decision was epoch-making, for it marked an end to two decades of incessant betrayal of the people's mandate by politicians who had come to believe that they owed no responsibility to anyone but themselves. It gained added significance, in the light of what followed.

Mr Gandhi's first major act at the Centre was to pass an anti-defection bill. The opposition had been asking for, and indeed looking for ways of enacting anti-defection bills in the states it controlled, or at least a decade. Sheikh Abdullah had even taken advantage of Kashmir's special status to enact such a bill.

In the political sphere, the major achievements have been the Punjab and Assam accords. These accords ended the suspension of democracy in these states made possible by the holding of elections and the emergence of a popular government. It is hardly necessary to reiterate that an indefinite suspension of democratic rights is a sure road to armed rebellion.

What was almost as important as the accords themselves was the manner in which they were forged. In the case of Assam, the entire process was carried out in full public view. In Punjab, where every previous attempt to arrive at a negotiated settlement had been foiled by a spate of killings by the extremists, the negotiations that preceded it were held not only in absolute secrecy, but behind a barrage of disinformation which kept the extremists off guard till the very end. Neither of these two crucial agreements would have been possible had Sant Longowal and the AGP leaders not developed a basic trust in the Prime Minister's word. This is a faith that Mr Gandhi never inspired.

Investment Boom

In the case of Rajiv Gandhi, one may be tempted to belittle achievement by ascribing it once again to his charm. But the truth is that the AGP leaders had been schooled in nine bitter years of conflict, and the Akalis had known "betrayal", in the form of purchased defections from the party, ever since the days of the Gurnam Singh ministry of 1967. What tilted the scales in favour of trust once again was the consistency of Mr Gandhi's behaviour towards the opposition. Not only in Karnataka, and over the anti-defection bill, but on almost every major national issue since the formation of his government, Mr Gandhi has solicited and often taken the advice of the opposition.

The government's achievements in the economic sphere have been equally impressive. At the end of January, the income tax was yielding Rs 658 crores more than the Rs 1,600 crores it netted last year. Even without taking into account the possibility of a further rise in the last quarter—a normal occurrence—this increase means that somewhere around Rs 10,000 crores of previously concealed incomes are being declared this year as a direct consequence of the lowering of tax rates.

Coming on top of these reforms, the liberalisation of investment and licensing decisions has touched off

an investment boom in the country. The rate of new share issues has been times as high as it was just a few years ago, and both loans by the term-lending institutions and company deposits are also rising sharply.

All this means more higher outputs in the future, the wholesale price index has behaved itself, and had risen 2.9 per cent, before the government decided to take advantage of stability to slap on more advanced price increases.

It is easy to dub the reforms and the liberalisation licensing as "rightist", but in a society where rapacious new capitalists have extorted incomes from the poor by engineering planned shortages of goods for almost three decades, in the process amassed an astounding wealth, liberalisation is the only socialism, for it forces producers to compete, produce more, bring prices and try to earn "profits" is a return on increased productivity.

Mr Gandhi's tax reforms are wholly consistent with these actions. For once again, it is from the budget speech and calculations given in it that of the tax reforms was more money (the government expected to lose at least Rs 200 crores but to induce a greater tax compliance, i.e. a greater of honesty).

Tax Reforms

Even the government's actions which were misconceived with and have gone badly in recent weeks, were intended for a political purpose. This was public notice that the government intended to break the old nexus between the "vested interests" (the Gandhi's phrase) based on money donations, the ban on company donations, last budget and the broad by both Mr V.P. Singh and Gandhi in December, the funding of elections was in the corner, only under the resolve.

The above catalogue of impressive. To cite them claim that everything meticulously conceived and executed. But the important note is that Mr Gandhi is not willing to content to making marginal adjustments to the trim of the ship of state, his advisers wish to turn around. The direction he takes the country is the key.

If all this is true, why are the Congress rank-and-file up in arms? The short answer is that the Congress cadres, and not even those of the class interests of the class, were drawn do not concern fact are in conflict with the rest of society. This class have characterised themselves as "intermediate" class of small and medium-scale manufacturers is now on the verge of revolt.

(To Be Continued)

Reasons For Decline Of Party System

By BALRAJ PURI

THE Congress centenary celebrations and subsequent organisational changes in the party occasioned widespread discussion on the state of its health. Nobody expressed his dissatisfaction on this account more eloquently than its president. But a matter of wider concern is that the decline of the country's premier political party is unmatched by the ascent of any national opposition party. This dual development might have a common origin in the declining health of the party system.

All parties have lost their credibility and distinct ideological shapes. They are centralised and do not provide for dissent. Most of them depend on a single leader and do not hold organisational elections. Their funds are unaudited

and philosophical legitimacy. He called on all good people to leave government, the parties and the *rajniti* and to join *lokniti*. His movement in 1974 was directed not against the ruling party or its policies, but against the whole system lock, stock and barrel.

Again, the most vigorous opponent of the party system was Mrs. Indira Gandhi who, ironically, echoed JP's distrust of "western democracy" and its institutions in almost identical phrases. What is more, and even more ironically, in debunking ideologies, the pragmatic and dynamic Sanjay Gandhi appeared to follow JP even more faithfully. The forces of anarchism and authoritarianism thus collaborated in eroding the institutional and ideological foundations of the

with him and asked him to leave. Thus, no arrangement to share the Congress monopoly of power with the opposition could work.

Dr Ram Manohar Lohia sought to dent the Congress monopoly by uniting all opposition parties on the basis of his theory of anti-Congressism. In the process, ideology was replayed by power and the lack of it as the foundation of political alignments. Mrs Indira Gandhi responded to the new threat to her supremacy by encouraging political polarisation for or against her. Loyalty, not ideology, became the test of advancement for Congressmen.

As the ideological boundaries between parties got blurred, inter-party traffic, spelt out as defections, became easier in the *man's land* around them. The SVD experiment collapsed, *inter alia* because power did not prove to be a more durable cement than ideology. With the death of Dr. Lohia, the experiment lost both its architect and its theoretician.

However, a far more crippling blow to the party system was struck by Mr Jayaprakash Narayan. He favoured neither the Nehru-Mehta style of co-operative politics nor the confrontationist politics of Dr Lohia. He simply abandoned both the leadership of the major opposition of the time, so orphaning and crippling it, as well as party politics altogether. Further, he led a formidable assault on the party system from the commanding heights of Gandhian morality and radical humanist philosophy and succeeded in undermining its moral

greater scope for concentration of power here. For this reason, power helps, as nothing else does, in extending the ruling party's influence in collecting resources and perpetuation of itself in office. Elections put a further premium on the role of money. Power and money have become more potent factors for the unity, discipline and success of parties than ideology, programmes, the calibre of workers and the quality of leadership.

The party system is, of course, a sub-system of a broader socio-economic and value system. Any attempt to reform the latter would inevitably improve the former. But, conversely, if the party system could be rejuvenated, it might act as a strong catalyst for wider regeneration. A better understanding of the socio-economic forces released by modernisation and of the upsurge of ethnic and religious urges, as also a better appreciation of the role of the party system in preserving democracy and national unity, by the political and intellectual leadership, in particular by utopians and perfectionists, are indispensable if the party system is to start to recover.

Immediate grant of interim relief urged

NEW DELHI, February 18 (UNI): A memorandum signed by more than 500 journalists of Delhi was submitted to the Union labour minister, Mr P.A. Sangma, yesterday demanding immediate grant of interim relief.

However, Mr. Nehru still contributed to the growth of the opposition by helping some of its stalwarts like Acharya Kripalani, Acharya Narendra Deva and Mr Asoka Mehta to return to Parliament.

Janata Experiment

The PSP ideologue, Mr Asoka Mehta's thesis on the "compulsions of backward economies" was, in any case, another approach to the challenge of one-party dominance. He argued for demarcating areas of agreement between the ruling and opposition parties which could be taken out of the purview of party politics. He wanted, for instance, the Planning Commission to be an area of inter-party co-operation and agreed to be its deputy chairman while continuing to be a member of the PSP. The party did not agree

to JP's reservation of his hostility to political parties, their help that he overthrew the parliamentary system in 1977. The personality that ment of political logical lines. The ve parties, under was the greatest e failure of the and the stagna stem from which ered.

ay created by the y as a basis of was readily filled l on caste, com egion and tribe, nality cult, car er of money. But, er causes for the which, in turn, le of ideologies based on them ologies proved articulation and growing and Nor could they olving problems olpment and

was aggravated le-intellectual politics. Before in action was theory, politics ins. Now, when require greater intellectuals are either attracted by non-political careers or are being driven out of politics by party mafias.

The intellectual and moral decay of the parties has been compounded by growing political centralisation. Power has started flowing from top to bottom, instead of the other way round. In many states, elections to local bodies, many of which have been emasculated, have not been held for decades. Such trends in state institutions and party organisations have supplemented each other. The recruitment and nurturing of leadership from the grassroots upwards has been replaced by the growing importance of power-brokers.

As the role of the state is far larger and the system of checks and balances far weaker in India than in

Parliament adjourns

Kripalani dies of cardiac arrest

By Our Staff Correspondent

AHMEDABAD, March 19.

ACHARYA J. B. KRIPALANI, the nonagenarian Gandhian leader, died this afternoon at the civil hospital here due to respiratory and cardiac arrest.

He was 96. The Acharya's body was brought to the Harijan Ashram at 4 p.m. and was kept in the Mama Sahab Phadke room in the ashram trust guest house, just a few metres away from Hriday Kunj where Gandhiji used to stay.

The funeral will take place tomorrow at 10 a.m. on the banks of the river Sabarmati near the ashram.

The Acharya, who was ailing for some time, was admitted to the

Kripalani a giant of Gandhian era — Page 11

civil hospital on March 6 for urinary tract infection. He was very weak and had developed a small respiratory arrest, according to Dr (Mrs) A. B. Desai, the hospital superintendent.

Six days after admission, the Acharya developed throat infection. He did not respond to any treatment. Dr Desai said the Gandhian leader late last night developed high fever and passed urine, full of puss. He went into coma this morning. But he had his

morning coffee. At about ten this morning, he had difficulty in breathing. The hospital doctors tried their best, including artificial breathing, but the end came at 2.05 p.m.

As soon as the news of his death reached Gandhinagar, the state capital, the chief minister, Mr Madhavsingh Solanki, and the home minister, Mr Prabodh Rawal, rushed to the civil hospital and paid a floral tribute to the late Acharya.

The Governor, Mrs Sharda Mukherjee, also drove from Gandhinagar and paid floral tribute to the "dada" as he was affectionately known. Soon, Mr Shankarlal Ban-

ker, the aged Gandhian trade unionist and former chief minister, Mr Babubhai J. Patel also rushed to the ashram.

The flower-bedecked body of the Acharya was kept on a wooden platform with women inmates of the ashram chanting 'Ram Dhun' and Bhajans.

Immediately on hearing the news of his death, the chief minister conveyed the news to the Prime Minister through a wireless message. Wireless and telephonic messages were also sent to Acharya's nephews Rewa and Chanshari in Delhi and Agra as well as to his niece in Bombay. The Gujarat Vidyapith, where the Acharya was a professor,

Mr Krishnaswami said that the Acharya always wanted to point out the Gandhian path to his countrymen and to make them realise that the country could only progress through this.

UNI adds from New Delhi: Both Houses of Parliament today adjourned as a mark of respect to Acharya J. B. Kripalani who died in Ahmedabad this afternoon.

The Parliamentary affairs minister, Mr Bhisma Narain Singh, informed the Lok Sabha about his death when the House was discussing a private member's bill on free legal aid.

He said it was with "great sorrow" that he was informing the House of the Acharya's death.

He said it would be a advisable in this "moment of grief" to adjourn the House.

The House observed two minutes' silence before it was adjourned.

In the Rajya Sabha, the leader of the House, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, announced the death of the Acharya.

Members observed two minutes' silence before the House was adjourned.

Moving a resolution, Mr Mukherjee said the contribution of Acharya Kripalani to the country's freedom struggle was well known.

Mr N. P. Nanda (Cong-S) said his party associated itself with the resolution. He said with the death of Mr Kripalani, the country has lost another father figure.

Mr S. C. Jha (Janata) described Mr Kripalani as a revolutionary and a true Gandhian. The country had lost another stalwart of the freedom struggle.

Dr Bhai Mahavir (BJP) thought Mr Kripalani never sought power and continued to work for the country's moral development.

Mr Satya Narain Reddy (LD) said a Kripalani had not only inspired the old revolutionaries, but also the youth.

Mr Shahidullah (CPM) said Acharya Kripalani's services were well known. The country had been deprived of another revolutionary.

Mr R. Mohanaragam (AIADMK) said the younger generation should get inspiration from the contribution of a revolutionary.

Mr S. P. Mitra (Ind.) described the Acharya as the truest disciple of Gandhi.

Mr Dinesh Goswami (Ind.) said India had become poorer by his death.



Acharya Kripalani

President, P.M. pay homage

NEW DELHI, March 19: The President, Mr N. Sanjiva Reddy, said today that in the death of Mr J. B. Kripalani, the country had lost a "stalwart of the Gandhian age," report PTI & UNI.

In a condolence message, the President said Acharya Kripalani had never aspired for any public office or position of power. "He pleaded untiringly for cleanliness in public life," he added.

Mr Reddy said the Acharya had the good fortune of being closely associated with Gandhiji for a long period. He had a record of selfless service to the country in the true Gandhian spirit for 60 years.

The Prime Minister, said that Acharya Kripalani "will be remembered for the outspokenness with which he espoused his beliefs."

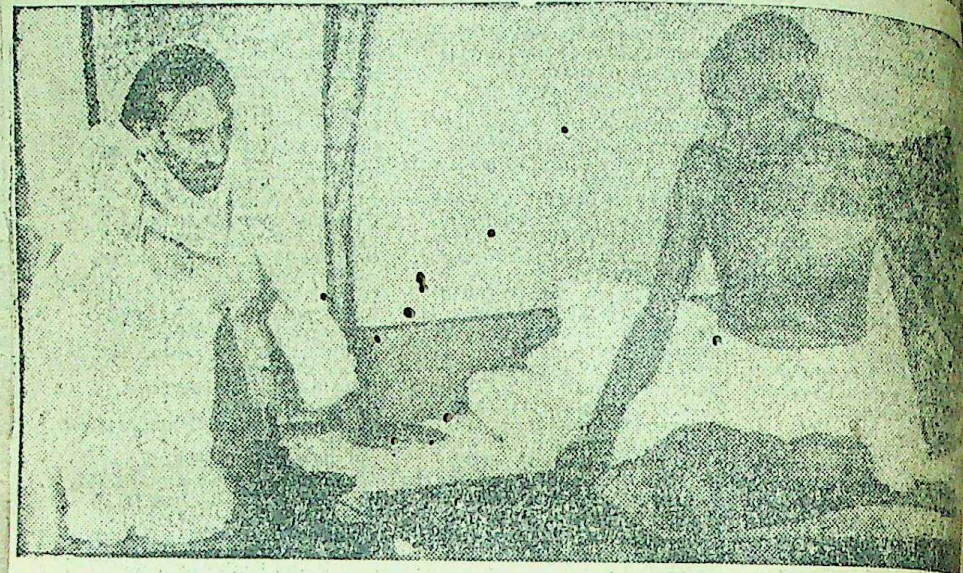
Expressing her grief at the Acharya's death, Mrs Gandhi, in her condolence message, said that he was "a link between the old and the new."

Continued on page 9 Column 4

Acharya Kripalani was the last of the free India great service both. His passing thus rings which all but disappeared from the scene burning passion of that person of Acharya Kripalani but also another chari. Now, however, even his long and glorious innings for his loss. Unlike Rajendra Prasad, who had held the highest official positions and never accepted office without him a choice between a birth in one of the Raj Bahadur. For he served the nation as an upright critic of the government. He had become a minister in his scathing denunciation of the government. He was perhaps mistaken in some and beneficial role in others. He was impartially even during the time he had worked hard and dissent seemed to Cassius-like figure and a frame, rather like a Ron weaver seemed ideally matched. It will be much missed in the country. He seems to have become an advancement but almost

Kripalani—a giant of Gandhian era

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Acharya Kripalani with Mahatma Gandhi.

—was born in 1888 in Hyderabad (Sind). A revolutionary since his student days, Jivan B. Kripalani was successively expelled from the Wilson College, Bombay, and the D. J. Sind College, Karachi, for his radical views.

He then joined the Fergusson College, Pune, where he sobered down long enough to take a bachelor's degree in philosophy and a master's degree in history and economics.

He jumped into active politics in

president of the Congress party.

After independence and the fury of partition, he found that his temperament clashed with other leaders. He resigned from the presidency and formed — within the party—the Congress Democratic Front in 1951. At the end of the year, when he found the atmosphere unbearable he made a complete break with the Congress to form the Kisan Mazdoor

him, then Union minister for

Both as a public speaker and writer, he distinguished himself by originality and vigour of expression. He was the author of several pamphlets on Indian nationalism including "The Gandhian Way", "Politics of Charkha", "Non-revolution" and "The National Congress". As a competent editor, he gave perhaps the best example of basic education known in Wardha scheme which, with its charm for wit, he dubbed as 'latest fad'.

The last decade or so saw Acharya become a very frustrated —disappointed at the lack of vitality in Indian politics. He was at the squabbles in the Janata

Though he was an ardent supporter of the Janata party, a few years ago he criticised Mr Jayaprakash Narayan's concept of total revolution going against Mahatma Gandhi's principles. He also used to criticise Janata ministers' life style.

However, there was no rancour or bitterness. Close to the people, he heard the rumblings of political agitation and ideological clashes. A few days ago and warned the nation: "I listened to me. I am now concerned with what I can do."

Labour of love

In March, 1978, the Acharya issued a statement bidding farewell to public life—though he continued to act, along with Mr Jayaprakash Narayan, as a mediator in the feud within the Janata party.

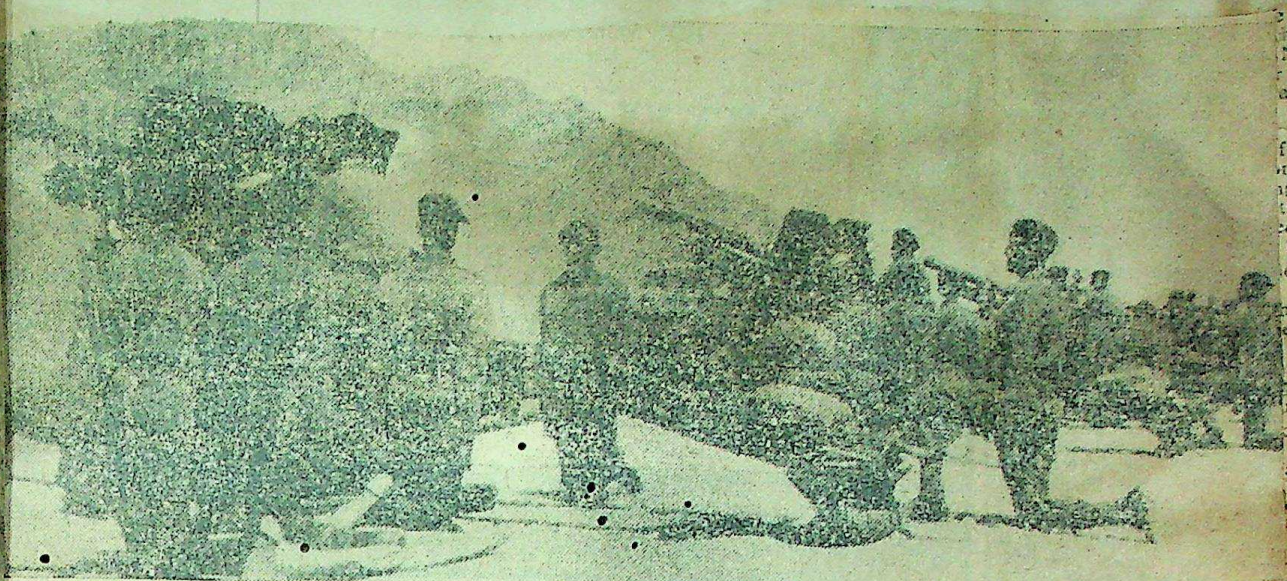
His statement read: "I have tried to serve the nation for the last 40 years with whatever ability God has given me. It has been a labour of love. I had no connection with any government before or after independence. As human creations, I consider all governments imperfect. I am some less so than the others."

He concluded: "However this does not mean I have taken 'sannyas'. I ever the freedom of the individual and the honour of the nation are at stake, to safeguard these I shall not hesitate to jump into the fray."



Acharya Kripalani with Lord Mountbatten and Mr Satyanarain Sinha at a party.

... Delhi home. Mrs Kripalani died in



SENTINELS OF OUR BORDERS: Troops stationed in Ladakh.

The long and short of Indian defence

Short-term defence orientations often reflect our long-perspective on national security.

by Maj. Gen. K. Palit (Retd.)

Concerned about the deteriorating situation in the cold war between the superpowers and its spill-over into the Indian Ocean region, a number of leading Indian security mat-

ter, civil and military, seminar organised by the International Centre for the Study of the Indian Ocean Region to discuss "India's Security: A Politico-Strategic Analysis". The book under review is a definitive and balanced account of the current situation in the Indian Ocean region, as well as a working paper under that title. Inevitably, a number of participants questioned the feasibility of confining the purview of a broad, dif-

ferent, stressing the Pakistan and China factors and the current U.S. "thrust" in the Indian Ocean region, particularly the strategic instability it has generated in the Gulf and sub-continental affairs because of its implied interventionist threat. The papers and the discussions at the seminar sought to cover the whole range of matters that directly affect the security of this country including the politico-economic factors.

One of the points of controversy raised in the discussions was the question of formulating a "security doctrine" for India, as was suggested by a working paper under that title. Inevitably, a number of participants questioned the feasibility of confining the purview of a broad, dif-

ferent appraisal (that may or may not be indicative of contemporary action) and contemporary appreciation of computable threats within an approximate time-frame. The latter can be translated into an executive "strategic doctrine;" the former projects itself beyond contemporary measures.

For example, Asian solidarity and the concept of viewing the subcontinent as a strategic entity are factors that have formed the core of India's national security policy from the Nehruvian era, as the chapter on "A Strategic Doctrine for India" rightly points out. They may not have been articulated as part of a composite or integrated policy, but they nevertheless have formed basic components of our long-term na-

India's Security : Ed. by U. S. Bajpai (Lancers Publishers, Rs. 115)

fusion notion such as national security — which appraises long-term national and inter-national contingencies outside a predictable time-frame — to a "doctrine," a term that connotes foreseeable executive compliance. It may be practicable to draw up a strategic (or even a political) doctrine, related to foreseeable developments in the political and military fields and thus to indicate possible executive measures or counter-measures. Not so with the concept of long-term "national security," which encompasses future contingencies affecting all aspects of national stability and development, adverse or supportive.

This is not merely an exercise in semantic nicety but an attempt to distinguish between long-term

national security outlook; and India's foreign policy has ever striven to promote these concepts. Yet our strategic doctrine, in adjusting to the hard reality of contemporary threats, has had to indicate executive measures that are contradictory to that concept. Our short-term defence orientations have cut across the grain of the long-term concept on both these issues.

An even more poignant example of contrariety between long-term national security aspirations and short-term expedience can be seen in India's policy on nuclear options. Even though we exploded a nuclear device nearly ten years ago and made significant strides in terrestrial and space rocketry, the Government of India has steadily adher-

ed to a "peaceful" nuclear policy — no weapons — because this is a core concept in our national security policy on nuclear power. Hence the thrust of our foreign policy has always been: "general and nuclear disarmament." We have been in the forefront of nations in initiating and sustaining this policy at the United Nations.

Yet, in translating our nuclear policy into an executive strategic doctrine, we have to take into account short-term nuclear threats posed by the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Indian Ocean region — most particularly in Pakistan. So far we have adjusted to the short-term requirement by announcing our policy of "keeping our options open." The discussions at the seminar clearly brought out that most of the participants felt that even this was not going far enough, because there is a danger of being left behind irrevocably.

In the concluding chapter the editor has made the following suggestions: "... the nuclear problem has to be tackled in a general and long-term way, while specific and immediate threats have to be met separately. With regard to the general issue of nuclear disarmament, further effort in concert with other developing nations need to be directed towards achieving an equitable and early solution With regard to a possible Pakistani nuclear threat India has two options: either it remains one step ahead of Pakistan in a nuclear weapon programme so that it is not caught in a disadvantageous position, or it keeps its nuclear weapon capability in complete readiness.

What should have been made clear is that the one — the effort towards nuclear disarmament — is a part of our long-term national security aspiration; whereas the other should be part of our contemporary strategic doctrine. The two may appear mutually exclusive, but if viewed in their different time-frames the contradiction can be reconciled. There should be no room for muddle-headedness on such a vital issue.

faith, then his offering must be perfect," he says. He knits out a boat with fresh green leaves and arranges the flowers in layers. Over the flowers he sprinkles puffed rice and cane sugar (for the fish) and cotton wicks to be lit.

The Double Journey

by Anees Jung

"Children run out of the temple and play in the dust.

God watches their games and forgets the priest . . ."

—Rabindranath Tagore

PEOPLE go on pilgrimages looking for truth, for peace, for God. I have often wondered if a physical journey to a place guarantees this. In March I was among a group of high-powered ladies at the tomb of Salim Chisti in Fatehpur Sikri. While their "non-aligned" husbands were discussing the future of a fragmented world I found myself beside the large, motherly Begum Zia walking across a stony courtyard scalded by an ancient sun. While others had their feet tied in bags of cloth she walked barefoot her head bowed under a dupatta.

Inside the breeze-filled space of the marble tomb she closed her eyes and stood for what seemed a very long time. She circled the saint's simple grave, stared at the green chador, tied a string in a filigreed hole and emerged looking radiant. The emperor Akbar had walked barefoot to the saint and asked for a son. What did Begum Zia pray for? "I prayed for your *salamti* and ours," she said. Her answer was spontaneous, seemed immediate and felt. "If in the name of God man can create something so beautiful, why then does he destroy in that very name?" observed the dark-haired wife of Mexico's foreign minister.

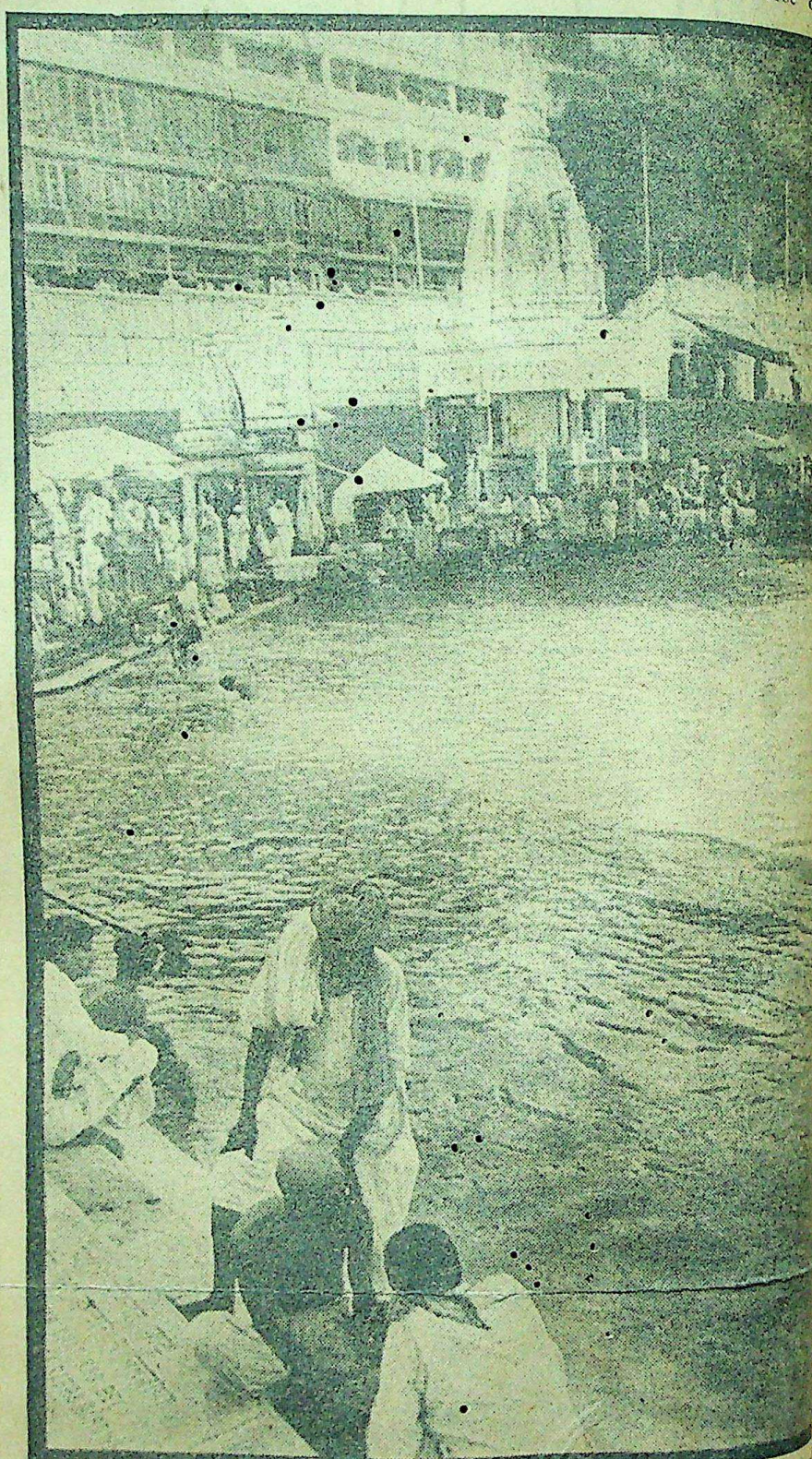
Outside the tomb I met a young boy who was nursing a baby duck in his hands. He had found it abandoned on the steps of Bulund Darwaza. He would not take it home for there was no water in his house. And the duck he knew would die without water. He followed me around nursing his predicament, holding the frightened bird like a treasure. Suddenly we saw him running back towards the

fountain in front of the tomb. He gently slipped the bird into the pool. The duck opened its yellow-black wings and made ripples in the green waters. The duck I knew had found its medium and the little boy, his moment of joy. The presence of the saint, diffused through the ages, briefly returned.

Later in the month I went to

Vrindavan looking for Krishna. I walked into temples for glimpses of resplendent blue idols and told myself that they are his visions. I watched ras-leelas in the deep of the nights and saw bhakti transformed by an asthmatic microphone and found myself walking with a frenzied crowd meeting swamis, goswamis and widows with shaved

heads. Krishna times more, of godhead. People here as they offer stars. His picture shops, wayside backs of rickshaws. Krishna I went in to elude. the day I met a saffron robe



DOORWAY TO HEAVEN: "Hardwar owes its life to the river as do its denizens." Cascio.

The bear was part of the family; he was like a brother, a friend, often a mentor. He shared the family's wheat, guarded it at night and played with the children when he was not out on the road making a living. What happens to a bear when he dies, I asked him. "We bury him like a man," he said. The man

there is conducted with bhakti, shops are arranged with love. The morning begins with a walk to the ghats where many men ply many trades. Some have sat here for generations and applied chandan on countless heads. Some sell balls of wheat flour, the food of the fish that live in the river. When they are fed, the dead are blessed. Some

Masjidon, mandiron ki duniya mein

Mujh ko pehchantey kahan hain log

Mein zameenon ko be-ziya kar ke

Aasmanon mein laut jata hoon

Mainn khuda bun ke khahar dhata hoon."

very programme. ... walked out of the Com- ... states because, unlike Egypt ... own rate will ... ment is not going to ... was PAID ... which constituted ... and politically.

Planning In Ar

...Krishna... more... dead. People... as they off... His pict... wayside... of rickshas... na I went... to elude... day I met... on robe...

American archaeologist, who had done some digging in Pakistan, and a certain amount of work in India, gave me my opinion about the future of archaeology in India. This reminded me of the recommendation Dr (later Mortimer) Wheeler had given before he left India in 1946.

dead man was evidently very poor and lived on coarse food. Now this verdict is certainly a step forward in understanding the past, but it is not enough. The man's social standing should have been further ascertained by a fuller study of the environment where the skeleton was found. This feedback is possible only if the finds are studied at the site, itself, or soon after their discovery.

Similar questions have to be raised and attempts made to answer them in regard to suc-

Wheeler, 30 years ago. A deeper insight into the life at this remote period still eludes us. Of course, such a study requires an anthropological background, which many excavators in India lack, well-versed as they are in the humanities. Further, what is urgently needed, is the use of newer techniques to uncover lost evidence, and a sincere effort to understand whatever is found at the end of the day's diggings.

The factors necessary to enlighten us about the Indus civilisation and subsequent culture are

The scope of archaeological surveys has to be such that they can no longer be entrusted to any one agency, states H. D. SANKALIA. Archaeologists, experts from various disciplines, can do this and afford us a deeper insight into the life and their culture at a given period in

cessive periods in our culture, as for example, the Painted Grey Ware culture. Though numerous sites pertaining to this culture have been discovered, nothing has been done in the last 25 years to define it. Key sites, like Hastinapur and Ahichhatra in Uttar Pradesh, have to be fully excavated to gain an in-depth knowledge of this culture.

Unfortunately, we are still concerned with the 'stratification,' 'pottery' and 'fortification,' aspects of archaeology which we learned from Sir Mortimer

relevant also in the case of historical periods such as the Kushana, Gupta and Chalukya. What we know about these periods is largely about the temples, sculptures and the terracottas. For more than 70 years now, nothing further has been found about the layout of a site and the life of the people living there. The public delights in reading about the ancient cities, Ayodhya and Dwarka, in our epics. But where are the ruins of these legendary cities?

Sites like Kausambi in U.P.,



logy

storal people, as was suggested by a writer, could have built any and such large monuments in Andhra, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Whether a ruling power or so-called group was responsible for the construction of these megaliths, it is clear that they must have had authority, and were good organisers.

To learn the truth about these megaliths, digging up one or two of them will not be enough. A 'burnfield' will have to be excavated. We saw no less than 100 megaliths in a field in Kerala, spread over an area of 10,000 sq. feet. Probably, these 64 burial places belonged to one social group. Whether this was so or not, must be proved by a full, contextual excavation, where a comparative, spot study is made of human and animal remains in the area. This is possible if the excavation includes experts from various disciplines, not just grave-diggers and recorders.

Archaeology is no longer a static discipline. It has long been a search for precious objects. Nor can it be a hunt for stratifications and excavations or for a citadel. Into the life of the people, the levels of society at a given time should be our goal, whether in the Harappan civilisation or in the case of the megaliths. To achieve this aim, every available resource should be used. In short, we need a trained, experienced team, and adequate finances.

...en before Sir Mortimer... ed on the scene, the... aeological Survey of India... had been doing excellent... so far as the preservation... isting monuments was con... d. However, little thought... given to the search for new... for exploration. Sir Mor... Wheeler, therefore, advis... e ASI, universities and re... institutes to draw up a... for archaeological survey... bide by it. It was because... systematic exploration that... ive traces of the Ganges... culture known as 'the... d Grey Ware' were found... was believed at that time... to fill the gap between... ndus civilisation and the... t historical period known... 'dark period' and general... ociated with the Aryans.

University of Allahabad, excavating the famous Mohenjo-daro site, laid bare the ruins of the Harappan civilisation, where the Aryans had stayed for some time. Later, several stone age sites were discovered in the Valley in Mirzapur district. The University of Patna has been digging at Patna Sahi, sites such as Chirand and Beguwa have been excavated.

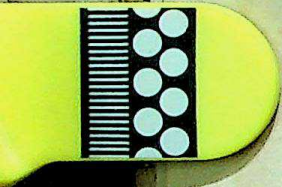
However, some vital questions remain unanswered. Who were the Harappans or the founders of the Indus civilisation? Where, is known. But, owing to the explorations by the universities of Kurukshetra and Patna, the limits of this civilisation are continuously enlarged. It has now been extended to the north of Kashmir, and accordingly, has reached into the north. It has been established that there was a chain of fortified outposts in Kutch connected with the Sind with

some of the superficial features of this civilisation are traced, we still do not know anything in depth about the Harappans. Did they live in villages?

Were there any villages? How did a Harappan village differ from a village of today? The observations on this subject made by Sir Mortimer Wheeler and his colleagues in the Natural History Museum, New York, are revealing. They chose to dig a small site, Allahadino, in the Arabian Sea coast.

The site is not very far from the Arabian Sea coast. In the last four years it has been dug up very systematically. Indeed, more than half of the site has been excavated.

Archaeologists found that, in this small site (only 100 square yards), it could be considered a village with a well-laid main street, houses on each side, and more than five wells. The site contained thousands of bangles, beads and terracottas, large storage jars holding many gold ornaments.



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BRITISH dislike of Nietzsche stems from the fact that they think of him as the philosopher who paved the way for Adolf Hitler. And faithful colonials as we Indians are, we have also tended to ignore him though it should be obvious to every tyro who observes the European scene—political, economic, religious, cultural—that Nietzsche more than others reflected the modernity that was upon the world.

Nietzsche observed: "All truths are bloody truths for me." Not only the two World Wars but even minor events within nations and communities have tended to be bloodier and bloodier since Nietzsche's time. Even the apostle

seems now complete.

At the time I began writing, in the late twenties, innocence was still considered an ideal and happy state. Writers strove with one another to emulate innocence which, however, they felt they were fast losing. Premchand, Rabindranath Tagore, Sarat Chandra were supreme examples of this faith in the innocence of man in history but, being sensitive, they were tremulous about the imminent loss of innocence. R. K. Narayan in his novels asserted this innocence through a bantering tone of irony which was highly successful with his British readers. It is a verifiable fact that he had no Indian readers to speak of in all the years before Independence.

The progressive writers, taking their cue from Prem-

ernity of European imposition, said that the novel was almost a work of art but lacked order—conscious order imposed by the questioning of accepted values.

The conflict is natural. There can be no boundaries national or international in ideas. And if the hallmark of modernity is a will to lose our innocence, there is enough material for it in our public and private lives. As early as three or four decades ago T. S. Eliot could perceive that "the centre does not hold." The centre (or should it be centres?) are shifting alarmingly and our arts and letters are bound to reflect it. Living in a community which by and large seems unaware of modern European ideas we are torn between what we perceive, round us and what we would like to see. This makes good material for writing about but does it produce good or great works of art?

This conflict is quite in evidence if we compare the traditional masterpieces of the world and our own past with present works and contemporary letters. We pay our tribute to the great writers of innocence—Dante, Shakespeare, Homer, Ilango or Bhatrihari—by totally neglecting them. The Indian writer of today is willfully ignorant of his own tradition of writing though he pays lip service to the great writers who have lived among us. Translations of Indian classics are sporadic and there is no systematic effort at building up libraries of Indian literature. If there are English translations of them we have to thank foreign scholars who have devoted their time to it.

The spirit of modernity that is upon us in perhaps only a temporary phase: all modern-

Each advance in scientific knowledge does to death many innocent beliefs and superstitions. This destruction of innocence is perhaps the cornerstone of modernity as expressed in literature today. KA N A A SUBRAMANIAM examines the early Indian writers' attempt to cling to innocence, and the subsequent sophistication that regional literatures have acquired.

of non-violence of whom we seem to be justly proud (if nothing else), however non-violent and non-bloody his truths, died violently. Violence might have existed in the world in one form or the other throughout man's history of inhumanity but it has been more bloody in the twentieth century than at any other time. Literature which reflects the human situation is now more and more inclined to be violent and bloody.

As many founders of modernity as you can name are destroyers of innocence. Stanley Kunitz in an admirable essay entitled "A Kind of Order" pointed out that Charles Darwin destroyed the innocence of nature; Karl Marx destroyed the innocence of the State; Sigmund Freud destroyed the innocence of the mind; Albert Einstein destroyed the innocence of space and time. One might add other names to the list: Soren Kierkegaard destroyed the innocence of human choice; Nietzsche himself destroyed the innocence of Christian faith or faith in God.

This destruction of innocence is perhaps the cornerstone of modernity as expressed in the arts and letters of today, throughout the world. The recovery of innocence might seem to be just round the corner but we have all the while a dread of the innocence of an earlier time. If we had that innocence we would not know what to do with it. While the destruction of innocence has been systematic the recovery seems to be sporadic, ineffective and somewhat haphazard.

belongs to the sixties and seventies in India while it was on in some form or the other in Europe between the decades spaced by the two World Wars. The politicalization of interests in India accelerated the process of modernization as nothing else could have done. The loss of our innocence

chand, asserted for a long time that innocence belonged to the rural poor and the urban rich lacked it. But they themselves showed little faith in that innocence; they lived in such metropolises as India had contrived to have, or in Paris like Raja Rao or in London like Mulk Raj Anand.

I can remember a somewhat intelligent professor of English

MIRROR OF MODERNITY

remarking in the mid-thirties that the new wave of Tamil short story writers in the early thirties lacked sophistication. I take it that he meant not only in the language—this group was forging a new Tamil language for modern creative expression—but he meant by his remark the lack of sophistication in the ideas behind their stories and novels.

Since then Tamil writing has attained sophistication in manner and, largely, in content. We have only to contrast a short story of "Pudumaippittan"—The Lifting of the Curse or God and Kandaswamy Pillai—and a story of "Mowni"—the Flame Eternal or the Music of the Universe with a short story written in the post-sixty-five period—like Ashokamitran's The Day of Marriage or Sir or "Vannadasan's" Re-

ty, by the nature of time, can only be temporary. Works that dare to transcend a temporal spirit of modernity superimposed suburbanly on us from Europe or America will no doubt pass though there might be no signs of it yet. But unless we recover our own traditions of writing, however "modern" our output, the writing will be lopsided as is English writing by Indians when directed at non-Indian readers.

As far as letters and the arts are concerned India is definitely not a developing country. We have a literature of the past that is as developed as the literature of any developed country. We have had two thousands of years of development, even while we acknowledge that within five or six hundred years of development the literatures of the spirit of modernity with its heritage we have; a mere mirror of modernity might not be the final or only solution. It is left to the writer to recover his lost innocence, though this seems an impossible task—impossible tasks are the concern of the great writers of the world.

Letters

No Sense Of History

MR. Chaudhuri seems to have no sense of history whatsoever. "The Hindu-Muslim Problem" (December 12). As long as there was feudalism and a struggle for individual power, the Hindu-Muslim problem did not exist. The biggest fiends owing allegiance to the Mughals were the nawabs of Bengal and Avadh. The salient characteristic of their time was the combined rule of Hindus and Muslims.

After the annexations by the British and the consequent spread of anglicised education, the dependants of the old feudal order began educating themselves and finding jobs. It was this section of society which started showing signs of defying the British. Therefore Hume, who was the Home Secretary to the Government of India, in order to divert their attention, formed the Indian National Congress.

The Muslims of India, however, under Moolvi Syed Ahmad Bareilly and some other leaders in Calcutta, continued the 1857 struggle. It was only Sir Syed Ahmad of Delhi who managed to draw out a certain section of well-to-do Muslims, educate them, and recruit them into the services. The result of this continuous struggle was that the Muslim community remained backward. Thus pan-Islamism, to which Nirad Chaudhuri so contemptuously refers, was a more positively anti-British movement than that of the early Congress.

It was in the 20th century that Lokmanya Tilak and Annie Besant gave the Congress a positive anti-imperial stance. They made a pact with the nascent Muslim League in Lucknow in 1916. That was a highly combustible mixture for the Raj. So, it is to say the least stupid, if not deceitful, to compare the Muslims of India to the Zionists. As World War I progressed, the industrial class took shape in India, and it was this class which brought Gandhiji to the fore.

In its wake, the League-Congress pact became a casualty. No one could have seen this happen more clearly than Nirad Chaudhuri. Then why does he trace all that befell India to Muslim intransigence from the year 1920?

True, the Khilafat movement was left flat-footed in 1920 after the abolition of the Khilafat by Kamal Ataturk. The British would have been only too keen to retain Turkish monarchs as their puppets. They could then have used the Khilafatists to co-operate against Ataturk; but it was the Muslim League which was better organised and less backward. The League also had modern minded Muslims as opposed to maulanas and religious bigots, wahabis and ulemas. But it was precisely this former element which Gandhiji's leadership pushed into the background. The most talented of the Muslims

discarded was Jinnah. He always used to tell his followers, "Leave Gandhi to me. We are both banias and we understand each other's moves". When the offer of division came the dying Jinnah signed it readily.

Britain finished the war absolute paupers owing India over rupees 2,000 crores. All they wanted to find in India was someone who would ensure their economic interests. Both the Congress and League were ready to do so. What was easier than to divide and rule? Even though Punjab, N.W.F.P. and Sind had never voted in a league government, they were now to be from India's "womb untimely plucked". That would mean both British feet firmly in this sub-continent. Nothing could have suited Britain better.

With the departure of the British there were no administrative changes. When Kashmir became the bone of contention, huge "defence" orders poured in from both sides to keep Britain's weapons industry rejuvenated.

In the face of historical facts, the author's solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem is based on three puerile conclusions: by eliminating the Muslims from India (a course of action which is possible, but inconceivable); reducing the Muslims to a subordinate status and by accepting their demand to retain their group identity.

His first two solutions are illogical and shallow. The third requires more careful analysis and discussion. There need never have been a partition had Indian leaders followed Lokmanya Tilak's advice to accept the Montague-Chelmsford reforms.

Logically and reasonably the only right course for India and Pakistan to follow, it appears to me, is to pull together.

Mr. Chaudhuri, will remember what his countryman Churchill said, "You cannot unscramble a scrambled egg."

In conclusion, I would refer him to Dr. Radhakrishnan's definition of a Hindu as anyone who lives in the peninsula south of the Himalayas. Nor is there such a religion as Hinduism. The Sanatana Dharma divides all people of the sub-continent. So why point one's arrows at the Muslims? The Muslims of India are also as class and region conscious as any non-Muslims. Mr. Chaudhuri asserts that there is no Hindu-Muslim problem in the south. Why? — For the Muslim faith is the same the world over.

Maj. Gen. E. HABIBULLAH
Lucknow

IN the historical perspective the Muslim Indian's fervour for the survival and restoration of the Khilafat appears to have been totally misplaced and has only served to reinforce the emotional attachment to Pan-Islamism which has served no useful purpose far for them. Gandhiji's purpose was more practical: to politicise the Muslim masses and to draw them out into the anti-imperial struggle. He achieved his purpose.

I disagree with Mr. Chaudhuri's observation that the Muslim League began to think in territorial terms then. Indeed, even after he propounded his thesis at Lahabad and Rahmat Ali came to it with his Pakistan scheme, no Muslim politician adopted the idea. It was adopted only after the failure of the Congress-League alliance in 1937, when the League leadership felt cheated and thus affirmed their suspicion that united India they would be out-changed at every step and in their doubts about the sincerity of justness of the Hindu leadership.

Then, the Muslim quest had to be for identity and internal autonomy. This concept was implicit in the very slogan of Hindu-Muslim unity, as distinct from national unity. Incidentally, the first proponents of the two-nation theory were Hindu leaders—Lajpat Rai, B. K. Sarkar and Har Dayal. Indeed, Muslim theologians continued to argue against Muslim nationalism to the very end. It was not the territorial itch but the rivalry between the rising Muslim and established Hindu bourgeoisie that played a part in the creation of Pakistan.

As an Indian Muslim, I consider Pakistan a disaster, though as a Muslim Indian, I am prepared to live with it. But my rights as a citizen and as a member of a

NEEDED, while allowing the Nirad Chaudhuri to write is our prerogative, you have opted for objective journalism this time. Try and be a bit less controversial and give us something unbiased—at least for the sake of good journalism.

MAHMOOD SHAH
Bombay

MUSLIMS in India enjoy better rights than Hindus do in Pakistan. Has any Hindu ever been a leader of Pakistan? In India two Muslims have occupied the highest post of office. Muslims like Suleman Seif or Shah-ud-din can criticise the government openly, can Hindus in Pakistan do the same?

M. L. LULLA
Ahmedabad

In order to ensure that the poisonous Hindu-Muslim discord is ended, once and for all, there is only one practical course, states Nirad Chaudhuri. That is of accepting the demand of the Muslims to retain their group-identity in a parallel society.

All right-minded citizens of India and its well-wishers at home and abroad will agree wholeheartedly with this proposition. It would be in the best interests of India.

Y. A. HAMDULAY
Jaipur

minority group both by the Hindu and the Islamic. All that is needed is to be respected and in return, to call it secularism.

SYED
M.Y.

NIRAD Chaudhuri's views. Communism in India has been the compromise between leaders made by them. It is not was the only one this vivisection. who stood up to dividing the country feel that the part took place here adamant stand of the leniency of the Congress leaders in the

The Constitution guarantees the Muslim and privileges. Lack of understanding factors have been the animosity between communities, and economic development end it.

IN his controversy Nirad Chaudhuri there are only two sides to the toxic Hindu-Muslim in India can be seen of the younger generation. I cannot accept ways he has seen the first two to eliminate the third the other to subordinate against our own the basic structure. Regarding the proposal, the author's idea of assimilation in one India is therefore the only acceptable thing for their group identity society. But, it is not advanced to convince the masses. Moreover, by means assimilation, the culture and not to

Mr. Chaudhuri has pointed out that the short-sighted opportunistic leaders failed to see the long term consequences of the Hindu-Muslim division, and the Hindu-Muslim like to remain in their third position short-sighted to aggravate the situation.

PARAG

By BADR-UD-DIN TYABJI

LANGUAGE PROBLEM—II

TO make Hindi the most widely spoken easily understood and written language throughout the country, Hindi has to have Hindustani as its base, supplemented with the vocabulary in common currency in the day to day life of the people garnered from all their languages. It should directly draw on Sanskrit or the other classical languages only when no suitable word or expression already in current use is available.

The form that official Hindi should take, if it is to serve a national purpose, is important. A clear distinction must be made between Hindi as a regional language, and Hindi as a link language. Hindi as a regional or State language in the Hindi-speaking States may develop in the form that the people in that region desire; but Hindi as a link language should develop in the form of Gandhiji's Hindustani as far as possible. The late Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterji said: "We should see the writing on the wall. Sanskritized Hindi and Persianized Urdu are both now taking their common colloquial form, in Anglicized Hindi, freely used by Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, and others—even by the working classes who have not had much schooling. A bazaar Hindustani, throwing the grammar of Delhi speech to the winds and freely using English words to saturation is now the real lingua franca of North India". He, therefore, advocated that the Centre should give what he called "popular Hindustani" this status, not "to insist upon high style Sanskritized Hindi and Perso-Arabic-Urdu, which will have their special places of honour as mother tongues of people who accept them as their home languages, or declare for them as their cultural languages".

SCRIPT

Dr Chatterji further favoured the adoption of "the Roman script to accommodate both Hindus and Muslims, as well as speakers of all other languages (like the four great Dravidian speeches of the South)". By this, the interests of the large Indian communities settled overseas, who use Hindi/Hindustani for communication and as their link with India, will also be served. Most of them have to learn English, or at least a language written in the Roman script. By the same token, it would greatly facilitate the teaching of English in India. Besides, Hindi and Hindustani are rapidly spreading in West Asia and Africa through India's growing ties with them. It also needs to be borne in mind that most foreigners like to acquire at least a smattering of the lingua franca of the country through which they are travelling. In India, they are deterred from this, more by being confronted with an alien script than anything else.

English brought with it alien ideas, new ways of thinking and doing things. Its assimilation, its acclimatization, was, therefore, difficult, though ultimately also rewarding. Initially it was treated with considerable reserve by those who did not learn it, and used with a certain degree of self-consciousness by those who did. As the years passed, this

attitude altered radically. More and more people began realizing its value, and as generations of English-knowing people succeeded each other, subjective feelings in regard to it almost entirely disappeared.

The process of learning it also became progressively easier, as the new ideas that it had brought with it began to become part of Indian thinking, of our way of life. The proceedings of national organizations, for instance, were without any feeling of alienness though conducted entirely in English. Not until the Mahatma appeared on the scene in the early twenties was the position of English as the most important, if not the sole medium for serious debate between Indians belonging to different parts of India, challenged. Even now, for any precise discussion on politics, economics, and social affairs, English remains the most effective, if not the only, means of communication between Indians. This is so, not so much because Indians cannot express themselves in an indigenous language, but because the ideas they wish to convey are so often Western ideas. They are, therefore, best expressed in their own medium.

FORESIGHT

Indeed, the spread of knowledge of English as widely as possible is essential to enable us to advance rapidly in the fast evolving modern world of commerce, industry, science, and technology. We have been struggling to establish ourselves as an active participant in its making with considerable success. Our capacity to do so is vouched for by our atomic experiments, the launching of Aryabhata, and our burgeoning exports of industrial goods. We are now the inheritors of a rich legacy, bequeathed to us not by the British, but by the foresight of earlier generations who turned English from an alien tongue into our second language, one that an ever-increasing number of us have heard and learnt, consciously or unconsciously, and used in some form or the other, almost from the day of our birth.

It is true that Gandhiji said: "English can never become our national language or medium of instruction. It should not be allowed to transgress its place". But he also added: "English is a world language, I do not want to forget that language, nor do I want other Indians to give up or forget it". It is, however, Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterji who said the last word on the subject. "In the present situation, if you officially accept English and retain it in its present place, it will not do us any harm, mentally or spiritually. It is a neutral language, and it is not so foreign any longer—after some 200 years, it has virtually become an Indian language. Its vocabulary far transcends that of any other language, either living or dead. English alone, and no other Indian language, not even Sanskrit, could meet with our new type of intellectual hunger and our eagerness for knowledge, which have come to us in the modern age. We accepted English voluntarily—it was never forced upon us, in the way that Hindi is sought to be forced on the non-Hindi parts. In the

work of the Sahitya Akademi, our national institution for the advancement and coordination of Indian literatures in the different languages, English serves as the only effective bond or link. English has opened to the whole of India (and the world in addition) the treasures of old Tamil, of Kannada, of Marathi, of Sikhism, of Ghalib and the Urdu poets, of Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Vivekananda, of Rabindranath, and of Puran Singh".

Then, as regards the charge often made, that its knowledge extends only to a few who exploit it for their own benefit, Das Gupta points out that in the Census, "although nearly 923,000 returned English as their mother tongue, more than 11 million people returned as "knowing English". In fact, English is the most widely known second language in India, followed by Hindi, covering a little more than nine million second language speakers".

And about its current value even in the heartland of the Communist anti-Western world, Fred Hoyle, returning from a scientific conference in Moscow, reported that three-fourths of the conference was conducted in English, and about one-fourth in Russian, with a little French. Again, it is on record that "more than three-quarters of the world's output of articles on engineering (in 1,400 journals) are in English, as well as more than half of those on chemistry".

The important thing to recognize here is not only that English must be retained in India as long as it remains the dominant international language, but that as long as we continue to use English as we do now, English will remain the dominant international language, India, the other Commonwealth countries and the USA have already won for English the World's Linguistic Championship. It is in our national interest to ensure that it permanently retains this trophy, as English is the second language we can most easily learn.

PRECIOUS

English should not therefore be retained only on sufferance, like something to be endured as it cannot be cured. It should be recognized as a precious inheritance that is yielding rich returns, with enormous possibilities for further development. A national effort is required to spread the benefits of a working knowledge of English as widely as possible. We know that the so-called élite, even when shouting *Angrezi hatao!* from the house tops, managed to look after themselves (and their grandchildren too!) pretty well in this respect. We should socialize English. Widely disseminated in appropriate doses by modern methods, basic English would give everyone, possessed of talent and ambition, a ready entrée into the modern world.

A commitment to its propagation on a national scale should form an integral part of our language policy and economic development programmes, along with that of its two other basic components: Sanskrit, and Hindi or Hindustani in both the Devanagari and Roman scripts.

(Concluded)

MYTHS ABOUT THE MUGHAL PAST I

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THE world has essentially been the work of two races—Arabs and Turks. But the impact of the Arabs has been greater.

A look at the map establishes one extraordinary point—with some exceptions, most areas where Islam was taken to by the Arabs have till this day remained Muslim-majority areas (even if under non-Muslim rules, as in Central Asia), while vast regions conquered and ruled by the Turkish race for centuries never could become Muslim majority areas and are now, in 90 per cent of the cases, under non-Muslim control. The point needs elaboration.

Arab Drive

The Arab drive reached its high-water mark under Hisham Bin Abdul Malik (724-743), who ruled an area between and including, Sind and southern France. By the 9th century, not only did the house of Islam stand divided (centre for the Abbasids and extreme-west for the split-away Umayyads), the outward thrust had run its course. (Haroonur Rashid's wars against Byzantium were essentially punitive raids.)

This was followed by Mutawakkil's murder, a long period of internal dissensions, Turkish (mostly Seljuk) monopolisation of army and state power, the reduction of the Abbasid Caliph to a mere figurehead and topped, finally by the Mongol Sack of Baghdad (1258). The Arabs had passed into history.

On the ruins of their civilisation, the Turks were to build new, essentially martial empires, devoid—though not entirely—of the Arab's intellectual content. Nevertheless, these Turkish empires were Muslim empires and took the message of Islam to frontiers untouched by the Arabs.

Three mighty empires rose on the ruins of the Abbasid—the Safavid in the centre, Mughal in the east and Ottoman in the west. If we assume the Golden Horde to be a Muslim empire (not necessarily a wrong assumption), then the rule of the Turkish race extended from Assam and Deccan in the east and south to as far north as the Golden Horde's fluctuating borders with Muscovy and Baltic kingdoms.

Yet—and that's where the stark difference with the Arabs emerges—the Turks have lost them all. In Europe, the Turks retain nothing, except a small triangle in Thrace; and in South Asia East Bengal alone became a Muslim majority area during the long period of Turcoman rule.

As for areas not constituting Pakistan, most of the Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and frontier had already become part of the Arab empire long before non-Arab ascendancy began. The subsequent eastern Turkish rule failed, in nearly a millennium, to make the Punjab a Muslim majority province.

Even Delhi and U.P.—for centuries the seats of Turkish empires from Ghauris to Mughals—have retained Hindu majorities till this day.

Briefly, the Turkish race has lost to the non-Muslim virtually the whole of what is today the republic of India, besides the entire Eurasian plain running eastwards from Hungary through the Don-Volga basin to Chinese Sinkiang.

By contrast, almost 90 per cent of the areas occupied by the Arabs in the seventh-ninth centuries have remained Muslim till this day. All that they have lost is the Iberian peninsula, besides the Mediterranean islands. And even in places where the Arabs went not as conquerors but as merchants Islam has triumphed over the Greeks, Romans or Gepchaks, Ottomans or Timurids—

areas. The causes vary. What holds good, for instance, for Yugoslavia doesn't apply to Kazakhstan. But here, in this article, we are concerned with our part of the world—South Asia.

Most of India's Muslim rulers, especially the Mughals, had basically a "royal outlook" and did not touch the religious question as long as the Hindu potentates remained faithful vassals. Also, proselytism was something the Mughals left entirely to sufis and ulema, and seldom used state power for purposes of conversion. The results of this policy are before us.

Dr Mubarak Ali, however, sees very many other factors responsible for the extinction of Mughal power in India. He should know, for he is a historian who has specialised in Mughal India.

Head of the department of history in Sind University (with a Ph.D. from the Ruhr University, West Germany), Dr Mubarak Ali is a prolific writer. His writings range from pamphlets and booklets to monumental Urdu. The English books are *The Court of the Mughals*, which was his Ph.D. thesis, *The English Factory in Sind*, *McMurdo's Account of Sind* and *Delhose's Observations on Sind*.

His major Urdu books include *Taareekh Kya Hay*, *Taareekh aur Shaoor*, *Sind ki Taareekh Kaysay Likhi Jaay*, *Sir Syed aur Iqbal*, *Almiya-i-Taareekh*, besides several books on Sind's Arab and Mughal periods.

The most revealing of his books, to me, is *Akhri Ahd ka Mughalia Hindustan*, which gives a graphic picture of Mughal decadence towards the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century.

(Once, Jahan Dar Shah, heir to the Mughal throne, fainted when he saw a naked sword, and Bahadur Shah Zafar, concerned less with the success of the "mutiny" and more with maintaining protocol, protested to General Bakht Khan in a letter that his horsemen had entered portions of the palace forbidden to commoners!)

For revelations such as these Dr Mubarak is bound to remain unpopular with our Taj Mahal oriented middle class, which has idealised the Mughals, for most of Dr Mubarak's books take a look at our history from an entirely new angle and demolish commonly-held assumptions about the nature of Muslim rule in India.

To begin with, said Dr Mubarak, all of India's Muslim rulers, including the Mughals, didn't share power with others. These "others" included not only Hindus but also local Muslims.

Power-Sharing

Akbar alone, he said, had the foresight to see the need for power-sharing, but after him the issue didn't seem open. In fact, from Jahangir onwards, the Mughal rule became increasingly inward-looking, with sectarianism being clearly discernible in the formation of Iranian and Turanian parties.

The Mughal rule, he said, was essentially the rule of a martial minority that was indifferent to the welfare of the people, including local Muslims.

The reason why Sind became Muslim and not, let us say, north India, was Sind's peculiar social structure at the time of the Arab conquest.

The majority in Sind, he said, professed the Buddhist faith while the ruling class was the Brahmins, who also were tax collectors, and were oppressing the majority.

(Courtesy Dawn Overseas Weekly)

(To be concluded)

Myths About The Mughal Past—II

By MOHAMMAD ALI SIDDIQI

UNLIKE this scenario, in north India, the majority was Hindu which was fully under Brahmin control socially and politically.

Conversions, he said, occurred mostly in the lower classes. But "a Scheduled Caste Hindu remained untouchable even if he became a Muslim".

Throughout Mughal India, Dr Mubarak said, local Muslims were treated unfairly, with all key posts reserved for Mughals and other Turks from Central Asia. Even mansabdar—a semi-military, semi-civilian post—was monopolised by the Mughals well up to Aurangzeb's time. It was only after Aurangzeb that some concessions were given to local Muslims.

The fact was, he said, that a Rajput prince was closer to the Mughals socially than was a local Muslim convert.

Self-Centred Race

The Mughals, he said, were a "self-centred race, and this showed itself in their public works, and architecture.

"If they built palaces, they were for themselves; if they laid out gardens they were for Mughal queens and princesses and the nobility; if they encouraged art, the artists painted for the court, and if they built roads they were basically for military purposes.

"As for education, the Mughal rule is singularly devoid of any scientific achievements. All that the Mughals did was to give money to the ulema for running madressahs, and the madressahs only imparted religious education and outdated courses in mathematics, logic and philosophy."

Dr Mubarak said the Portuguese had set up a printing press in Bengal in the seventeenth century and, in fact, a printed copy of the Bible was presented to Akbar. "But Akbar failed to realise the importance of printing and dismissed the copy of the Bible as ugly."

Dr Mubarak said the history of the entire Muslim period must be rewritten, for so far it has given generations of Muslims a wrong image of their "glory".

"The glory", he said, was only in the imagination of Muslims: it wasn't there for the common man. The common Muslim suffered from exploitation and groaned under heavy taxation as much as a Hindu did. "As for the Taj Mahal, it was not for him: it merely reflected the tastes and pastimes of an elite."

Dr Mubarak said historiography in Pakistan today was run every much on Mughal lines. "You read the histories written during the Muslim period and all you find is references of kings and their wars. The common man, his condition, his ways of living and social life in general do not find any mention."

"This trend continues in Pakistan today. Most of our modern history, variously called the history of the freedom struggle or the Pakistan movement, is personality-oriented. And it is taught from first year to M.A. in a most unimaginative and repetitious way."

"While personalities are no doubt important and happen to be instruments of socio-economic change, history itself is more than mere achievements of heroes, for it is socio-economic forces that bring about historical changes and alter the thinking and ways of

living."

Dr Mubarak said history writing should be objective, which was hardly the case in Pakistan. Most Muslim history books contained derogatory references to Hindus, all battles between Muslim and Hindu kings were referred to as *jihads* and all Muslim dead were called *shaheed*. That showed a lack of objectivity, for most wars by Muslim soldiers of fortune on Hindu kingdoms were for territorial gains, and not for religious purposes.

Hindu historians, too, he said had developed a communal bias in their writings and often referred to the Muslim rule as India's darkest period contributing to south Asia's backwardness. "That is not fair," he said, "because all said and done Muslims enriched India's culture and civilisation."

Dr Mubarak said just as in Mughal India history was pressed in the service of the ruling classes, so also in Pakistan, "history writing is often done for the benefit of the rulers of the day and runs parallel to the views of the ruling class."

"For instance, history books do not give our students a history of democracy or of institutions of freedom. I am appalled when I see my children reading history books that keep silent on this vital aspect of human development."

"What we have read so far is institutional history, which is the history of kings and nobles, of wars of succession, and, in modern times, of personalities. It is a history that gives only the official viewpoint, lays emphasis on personalities who are regarded infallible, and gives from the famous men's speeches and writings quotations that help the ruling elite in their politics. This institutional history makes no mention of the masses and of the socio-economic forces that change history."

"What we need is anti-institutional history in which you give a proper place to the role of the masses, of the minorities, and, above all, of women, for our history so far has been a masculine history."

Dr Mubarak said history as a subject was 'finished' in Pakistan.

Pathetic Situation

One reason was that nobody bothered to study Arabic and Persian. "How could a person", he asked, "be able to read original books and old manuscripts and do some research work on our history without an adequate knowledge of these two languages?"

In Germany he had to learn Persian and Arabic before he was allowed to do research for his Ph.D.

Mr Mubarak said it was pathetic to note that each year there were hardly two or three students in the Sind University's general history department.

If history as a subject were to have a future in Pakistan, he said, "we must adopt modern historiography" and its chief characteristics must be objectivity, a non-communal approach, emphasis not on personalities but on the masses and on the socio-economic factors, a rejection of the colonial version of history and a rewriting of regional history (of Pakistan's four provinces).

(Concluded)

(courtesy Dawn, overseas weekly)

Pomp Without Po

he post of governor in India is not a ceremonial one. It calls for great personal integrity and intellectual courage and a full understanding of one's constitutional duties and responsibilities. There is much a governor can do to safeguard the interests of all the people under his care.

Unfortunately, for far too long the Union government has treated Raj Bhavans as the repositories of burnt-out and indisciplined politicians. M. V. Kamath, in the article below, describes how the power of appointment has been grossly misused by the Centre and calls for a movement to check its abuse.

M. V. KAMATH

ALMOST three and a half decades after India gave itself a constitution, there is still talk about it and about the role of the governor. What is his position in the scheme of things? Is he merely the constitutional head of the state whose duty is confined to performing routine ceremonial duties like cutting ribbons, lighting lamps, distributing prizes at sports and dog shows and inaugurating seminars or does he have anything more specific and important to fulfil? The vexed question of the governor's powers has no simple answer. Several experts have expressed the hope that conventions will evolve to more precisely define the rights and responsibilities of a governor. It has

been their view that many of the controversies that have arisen in the past about governors are "growing pains" inevitable in our idealistic and as yet young country.

It is anybody's guess as to how long it will take to develop a healthy set of conventions. It is not that the Constitution is totally vague on the subject of the governor's duties. They are laid down precisely enough. And any vagueness that may have been lingering was dispelled by a constitution bench of the Supreme Court which said in a unanimous judgment in May 1979 that the appointment of the governor by the President and his holding office during the pleasure of the President "does not make the Government of India an employer of the governor".

The court said: "The governor is the head of the state and holds a high constitutional office which carries with it important constitutional functions and duties and he cannot, therefore, even by stretching the language to breaking point, be regarded as an employee or servant of the Government of India."

And to make it clear beyond any shadow of doubt, the court added: "It is impossible to hold that the governor is under the control of the Government of India. He is not amenable to the directions of the Government of India, nor is he accountable to them for the manner in which he carries out his functions and duties. His is an independent constitutional office which is not subject to the control of the Government of India."

Commenting on this ruling, the distinguished lawyer and former solicitor-general of India, Soli J. Sorabjee says in *The Governor: Sage Or Saboteur* (Roli Books International, Rs. 95): "These weighty observations of the Supreme Court should be prominently inscribed in every Raj Bhavan in the states."

But how many governors have lived up to what the Supreme Court says is expected of them? And what has prevented them from living up to the expectations? It is well to remember that though the governor may not be an employee of the Government of India he is, and remains, the constitutional head of the state; power rests in the hands of the chief minister, and in any clash with the chief minister, it is the latter's views that shall prevail. This has been attested to by several governors, some of them no mean constitutional experts themselves. So frustrated was K. M. Munshi as

governor of Uttar Pradesh that he once said: "In my next life I would much rather be an ADC to the governor. I shall then be able to enjoy all the pomp and luxury of a governor's office without its frustration..."

Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai, as governor of the undivided Bombay state was no less unhappy. His grouse was that the chief minister of the state, Morarji Desai, was being unhelpful. "He does not even send me files for information," he told a confidant, "I would be happier living an ordinary, retired life..."

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, a former president of the Congress, no less, was similarly unhappy in the Raj Bhavan at Bhopal. Once seated at the dinner table with the governor of the Reserve Bank, H. V. R. Iyengar, as his guest he glared angrily at the dinner gong in front of him and striking it hard he said, "Mr. Iyengar, this is the only thing I can do here without having to seek the permission of my ministers!"

Justice Subba Rao has recounted how one governor told him in 1954 that he read 200 novels during his gubernatorial tenure, indicating thereby that he had no serious work to do. Another governor told him that he was a non-entity. And yet another governor told him that she was nothing more than a super-hostess. Commenting on all these incidents Soli Sorabjee says: "One can only say that these persons let down their high office and betrayed the high hopes of the founding fathers."

Things were not all that clear even when the founding fathers were alive and could speak out their minds. They often preferred not to. In 1951 when Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant was chief



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minister of Uttar Pradesh, Vishnu Sahay, a senior member of the Indian Civil Service who was himself to become in later years governor of Assam and Nagaland, asked him what he thought was a governor's role. Said Pant somewhat tritely: "The governor may, if he likes, send down a note, but he should not afterwards enquire about it." The governor, then, was Sir Homi Mody who was once a member of the viceroy's executive council. The story is told about him that he was twiddling with the radio one evening when he suddenly heard that he had just appointed a new minister! There had obviously been an inadvertent failure of routine in the announcement of the ministerial appointment made without the governor's knowledge. Writing about it, Sahay was to later say that "nevertheless is reflected the contemporary realities of power".

DIFFERENT governors have held different views of their role. Sri Prakasa, who was governor of Madras in 1952 and was responsible for a highly controversial move, has said that a governor is charged with four duties:

His first duty was to know that he is the representative of the Centre and to keep the Centre informed of the affairs of his state.

His second duty was to look after the interests of the state as a whole.

formed about developments out of their states, sometimes out of their chief ministers. Under the well-known formula, the governor has reported that one governor he knew, a leading political figure of his state, "quietly ignored the misdeeds of the chief minister". Another governor, when asked why the police in his state had not taken cognisance of instances of sati committed in his jurisdiction, quietly replied: "But they seem to have popular sanction" — a shocking reply to come from the mouth of a governor. Raghukul Tilak did not sound unduly perturbed. It was he, incidentally, who refused to resign — he had been a Janata appointee — when Mrs. Indira Gandhi came back to power in 1980 on the grounds that his term of five years in office was not yet over. He preferred to be dismissed.

"The way governors have been or can be removed," subsequently wrote Mr. Tilak, "makes them more hapless than the lowest government servant since the President, which in effect means the prime minister, can dismiss them at will without giving any reason." Mr. Tilak added: "The government servant has at least available to him the safeguard provided by Article 311 of the Constitution which is denied to the governor, perhaps because he is the head of the state."

Some governors have acted arbitrarily, without reference to the Centre. Some have acted in consonance with the dictates of the Centre bringing disrepute to themselves and their position. Some have defied the Centre — in different contexts — and have had to pay the penalty of being thrown out. Some, caught in the act of malfeasance, have preferred to resign and sneak out of their capitals. And at least one governor resigned rather than be humiliated.

The case of Sri Prakasa in Madras is, as L. P. Singh has testified, "in some ways the most interesting instance of a governor acting wrongly on his own, even against the wishes of the prime minister". In the general elections, the Congress had become a minority and the then Prime Minister Nehru recommended the democratic procedure of allowing the other parties, if they could muster a majority, to form a ministry, insisting that "the one thing we must avoid is giving the impression that we stick to office and that we want to keep out others at all costs".

C. Rajagopalachari was then a respected Congress leader, though he was not a member of the legislature. To put the Congress in power, Sri Prakasa hit upon a plan. Without informing Nehru, he nominated Rajagopalachari to the upper house, whereupon he was elected leader of the Congress Legislative Party, in violation of the prime minister's specific injunction that a chief minister should be a member of the lower house. The prime minister and the President both disapproved of Sri Prakasa's action, but the matter had to be left at that as the governor had acted within his constitutional discretion, even though his action, as Mr. Singh put it, "was violative of democratic morality and was of dubious constitutional propriety".

Then there is the case of Dharma Vira who, as governor of West Bengal, dismissed the Left Front ministry of Ajoy Mukherjee inviting not only bedlam in the streets but the opprobrium of the Calcutta High Court. It was stated that the dismissal had been made in "the national interest". The public backlash was so severe that in fresh elections, the Left Front was again voted to power. This time, in the very same "national interest", Dharma Vira had to be transferred elsewhere.

His successor in West Bengal, S. S. Dhavan, was to add a "bizarre new dimension" to the

happily persuaded to leave in the end. The governor, who stood his ground was Jagannath Kaushal who ignored repeated hints from the Janata government in Delhi to vacate the Patna Raj Bhavan. Perhaps it stands to the Janata's credit that it did not sack him.

By and large governors have been pliant tools of the Centre as it was in 1959 in Kerala when Governor Ramakrishna Rao dismissed the Communist government led by E. M. S. Namboodiripad. It has been said that Prime Minister Nehru himself recognised that it was a bad precedent which went against democratic convention. Nehru was however smart enough to let conditions deteriorate in Kerala before accepting Ramakrishna Rao's recommendation that the ministry be dismissed. In his book *Communism in Kerala*, Prof. T. J. Nossiter has quoted Rao as saying: "If only Panditji had told me what he wants me to do!" which is an eloquent commentary on Rao's capacity to think for himself.

IF Nehru was careful not to break democratic norms if at all it was humanly possible, his daughter had no compunction to use governors to suit her purpose as was shown in Haryana and — in a much more blatant way in Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim and Jammu and Kashmir. The audacity — not to say chicanery — of Ram Lal to try to overthrow the N.T. Rama Rao government in

Once seated at the dinner table, with Iyengar, the governor of the Reserve Bank guest, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya glared at the dinner gong in front of him and it hard he said, "Mr. Iyengar, this is the thing I can do here without having to permission of my minister!"

Andhra Pradesh in 1984 has no parallel. There never has been a more blatant misuse of power, unless it be Governor Homi J. H. Taleyarkhan's dismissal of Nar Bahadur Bhandari's government in Sikkim in May 1984 and Governor Jagmohan's despicable role in Jammu and Kashmir in getting rid of the Farooq Abdullah ministry, two months later.

Instead of being men of independence we seem to have had a string of governors of whom the founding fathers would have strongly disapproved with some notable exceptions as B. K. Nehru who was conveniently shifted from Srinagar to Gandhinagar in Gujarat, following his refusal to play ball with a scheming prime minister.

There are some doubts about whether Sampurnanand acted on his own or at the behest of the Centre when, as governor of Rajasthan, he erred first in inviting Sukhadia to form a ministry and again, on the latter's unwillingness to do so, in recommending President's rule — when he could have invited the leader of the opposition to form a ministry. Sampurnanand's decision to ignore the independent members of the Rajasthan assembly had no constitutional basis, but L. P. Singh believes that the governor's actions "were all his own" and "possibly influenced by his lifelong association with the Congress party" — not a very convincing argument for unconstitutional behaviour. But that is the problem with governorship. It calls for the utmost intellectual honesty and that is one commodity, it seems, which is in short supply in most Raj Bhavans.

It is not that governors have that much leeway that they can ignore conventions. L. P. Singh has pointed out that under the Constitution, the governor is

persuading the chief minister to press the appointment of a minister widely believed to be involved with insurgents. added, "I wonder, if refused to appoint a minister, the undefined discretion of his oath of office. For all that Mr. Singh, part, should be prepared to his ground firmly and costs and against pressure the Centre. It is against background that Governor vind Narain's experience rated in the same book special relevance. Another nor to recount his experience is Dharma Vira whose on the exercise of discretion worth studying considering discretion he showed in the Ajoy Mukherjee ment. In this exercise Vira gives his side of the which is that Mr. Vira was playing for time and ed unwilling to summon a slative assembly where the tion of whether Mr. Vira had a majority or not tested.

It is, as Dharma Vira, it, in the uncertain period when a minister state becomes unstable governor's powers and put to the test. As he "At this juncture he is the true custodian of the tion. He must act in a tely unbiased and objective

ner... It is a difficult it is to face such challenges people are raised to positions". Dharma Vira acquiesced self well when, as governor of Karnataka, and at a time the state was under a martial rule, he fought for a rule that an overdraft be given my "surprise," he writes. The central government intervention as an act of intervention. This resulted in a standing between the government and myself. Vira does not say "acute misunderstanding" cleared except to say he did was correct.

The best governor who have the support of chief ministers and of the officers, and with them without any cion or jealousy. N. V. Jung was known to be a governor. He had a career as governor of rashtira and died greatly honoured. The nawab was a punctuality Bhavan in Bombay as under Vijayalaksh was well-kept, stand no shoddiness. Bhavans in Bombay, cutta and Bangalore expected to be elsewhere, these are the by foreign VIPs, do to maintain the ments. One of the nors, Dr. H. C. Moh had the misfortune pointed governor gal. Dr. Mukherjee of simple tastes and existence to which ster, as a guest, It mortified Dr. promptly wrote asking to be mediate effect.

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OLOF PALME SHOT

No clue to killers

STOCKHOLM, March 1

(Reuter):
The Swedish Prime Minister, Mr Olof Palme, shot dead in a Stockholm last night by an unknown gunman who was at large some 11 hours after the country's first political murder in modern

Palme, 59, was killed minutes after leaving a city cinema with his wife. He was rushed to the Sabbatsberg hospital pronounced dead at 10.05 GMT.

Police said they still had no clue as to the identity of the killer and did not know what the motive was.

Police mounted the largest search ever seen in Sweden. Hundreds of possible suspects were cordoned off in the capital, carrying out unprecedented identity checks on anyone leaving the country's airports.

Police in the city questioned two men whose descriptions matched those which eyewitnesses provided of people at the

scene cleared of involvement. Police official commented: "We have nothing against him."

Police also stepped up searches of government ministers. The caretaker prime minister, Mr Carlsson, was flanked by a number of bodyguards when he went to announce that he was taking temporary charge. The government formally tendered its resignation to the parliament, Mr Carlsson said. Troedsohn, but all will remain at their posts in the caretaker capacity.

Meanwhile, the leaders of the

ruling Social Democratic Party today chose acting premier Ingvar Carlsson to succeed Olof Palme as party chairman and head of the next Swedish government.

The choice of Carlsson, until now a largely colourless technocrat, has to be endorsed by the Swedish parliament and this could delay his formal appointment as prime minister until mid-March.

Mr Palme's wife Lisbet, slightly injured in the attack, was reported to be sleeping at her home in Stockholm's old town after being released from hospital.

Mr Carlsson emerged shaken from an emergency cabinet meeting lasting several hours. He told waiting journalists that Palme's murder was a blow against Sweden's open society as well as an enormous loss to his family to colleagues.

The caretaker prime minister said Mr Palme had no bodyguards with him when the killer struck.

He said he was not aware of any recent threats against Mr Palme's life.

The last major political killing in Sweden was the murder of King Gustav III in 1792.

A large pool of blood and two bouquets of red roses marked the scene on a Stockholm street where Mr Palme was murdered.

A single bouquet of red roses, symbol of the Social Democratic Party which Mr Palme had led since 1969, lay in the pool of blood which stood out starkly on the frozen pavement.

Swedish police said there were no indications that the murder was political.

The Stockholm police chief, Mr Sune Sandstrom, described as incorrect earlier reports that Croatian separatists were suspected. "There is nothing to indicate that there were political motives or that any political organisations were behind this act," Sandstrom told the Swedish agency TT.

An anonymous telephone caller

told an international news agency in London that a group called the Holger Meins commando carried out the assassination.

The caller, speaking English with a northern European accent, said the group, which has links with the West German Baader Meinhof and red army urban guerrilla organisations, had killed Palme but he refused to give any reason for the attack.

"You can check the history books for why this was carried out. I am not prepared to tell you over the phone," the man said before cutting short the call. He gave no identifying code sign.

A group using the Holger Meins name claimed responsibility for an attack on the West German embassy in Stockholm in 1975 in which two diplomats and one guerrilla were killed and an upper floor of the embassy was blown up and gutted by fire. Palme was prime minister at the time of that incident.

Mr Palme, who was re-elected to a third term as prime minister in general elections last September, was at the time of his death the United Nations secretary-general's special mediator in the war between Iran and Iraq.

He was also chairman of the Palme Commission on Peace and Disarmament in Europe.

Indefinite curfew in Meerut

By A Staff Reporter

LUCKNOW, March 1: In view of the increasing tension and death of two persons due to stabbing over the past four days, indefinite curfew was clamped on Meerut city today.

According to the home secretary, Mr Mata Prasad, two of the three victims of stabbing have already succumbed to their injuries. The condition of a third is also stated to be critical.

More than 120 preventive arrests have been made so far and the Border Security Force (BSF) has been deployed in the more sensitive areas of the city.

As a result of these stringent measures, no untoward incident was reported from any part of the city today.

Meanwhile, 340 persons are reported to have courted arrest in Bahraich yesterday, in protest against the unlocking of the Ram Janm Bhoomi, which is also referred to as the Babari Masjid in Ayodhya. The persons were arrested while taking out a rally on the call of Babari Masjid action committee.



Olof Palme

compassionate place to live in. His contribution to disarmament and the reduction of economic disparities was immense. That such a man of goodwill be felled by the bullets of hatred is a matter of great sadness, Mr Gandhi observed.

The United Nations secretary general, Mr Javier Perez De Cuellar, has called the slain Swedish prime minister, Mr Olof Palme a truly steadfast supporter of the United Nations, and said his contribution to international peace and cooperation would be his lasting legacy.

Since November 1980, Mr Palme was the secretary general's special envoy in efforts to end the Iran-Iraq war and made five visits to the area in a vain attempt to stem the conflict.

When he was minister of education in 1968, Mr Palme marched side-by-side with a North Vietnamese diplomat at an anti-American rally in Stockholm.

Mr Palme as a great force for peace and disarmament.

A brief statement from the British prime minister Mrs Margaret Thatcher's office said her conservative government was

State mourning today

NEW DELHI, March 1 (UNI): State mourning will be observed tomorrow throughout the country and Indian embassies abroad as a mark of respect to the memory of Swedish prime minister, Olof Palme who was shot dead this morning.

Flags will fly at half-mast and all official engagements have been cancelled, according to a government spokesman.

the two systems spring from the differences in the history, culture and economic development of the two countries. There are some questions of substantive and procedural law which Indian and US systems have answered differently—for instance, the practice of contingency fees, the way to handle class actions, and how broad and costly "discovery" should be. Different countries have different answers to these problems. Contingency fees which are permitted in the United States are prohibited in the United Kingdom. Canada and India as serious public evils and as being against public policy.

The Indian judiciary is wholly competent to deal with any dispute in any field of law, and has in the 35 years of the history of our republic, ably dealt with far more complex issues than those arising from the gas plant disaster at Bhopal.

The Supreme Court of India, in the range of its power and the sweep of its jurisdiction, is without a rival in human history. Its writ runs over more than one-seventh of the human race. It has jurisdiction in every domain of the law—constitutional and ordinary, civil and criminal, social and industrial.

the number of partners in any partnership is limited by Indian law to twenty?

Further, since the government of India has taken over the conduct of the Bhopal cases on behalf of the claimants, the highest law officers in the state—the attorney general and the solicitor general of India, and the advocate general of the Madhya Pradesh state—would be available to the claimants.

The law of torts is well established in India and has been enforced for more than a century. India is an excellent example of how a country can have fairly developed and stable tort law without having an avalanche of tort litigation. Concepts of negligence, contributory negligence, absolute liability, different types of damages which can be awarded, etc. are all well recognised. Some tort law has been codified in the form of special statutes.

The law of torts in India is the same as that which prevails in the United Kingdom, subject to modifications by our statutes which are not relevant here. That law of torts was in force in India prior to the promulgation of the Constitution in 1950, and Article 372 (1) of the Constitution provides that subject to its

would be unable or unwilling to ensure their hearing without delay.

There have been countless cases in India where a judge has been directed by a higher court to deal with a particular matter on a day to day basis, or special tribunals have been constituted, or the Supreme Court itself has issued orders for the speedy and expeditious disposal of important cases. The case of *Shriram Fertilisers* shows how in a similar case of oleum gas leak from a chemical plant in Delhi, the Supreme Court swung into action within two days of the disaster last November. Is there any reason to assume that the courts would not act expeditiously for thousands of victims of the Bhopal tragedy, when they did so for far fewer sufferers of the gas leak in Delhi?

India will have lost nothing of its true value if the government loses on its plea in the New York court. The ends of justice often require the truth to be faced squarely and stated bluntly. Indian courts are inadequate only in the sense that they are an inadequate instrument for procuring the astronomical damages which American juries are prone to award. But honour and self-respect are infinitely more important than money.

Adequacy Of Indian System

Trial Of Bhopal Cases

By NANI A. PALKHIVALA

SELF-CONDEMNATION is the unacceptable price the Indian government has to pay for its plea to have the Bhopal cases tried in the USA. The American law is well settled as a result of several judgements of the US Supreme Court. The rule is that the courts there will not try suits like the Bhopal cases where the cause of action arises in a foreign country. Unless the foreign country has no adequately developed law and cannot supply an adequate forum.

The American lawyers would be delighted to have the cases tried in the USA since they would get their contingency fees which could be 30 or 40 per cent of the damages awarded. With a view to persuading the American court to try the cases in the USA, they tried to make out that Indian jurisprudence is not properly developed, that the Indian judiciary is unequal to the task of dealing with such cases of tort, that the Indian bar is ill-equipped to deal with such mass litigation and that the Indian system is so riddled with deficiencies and delays as to make it impossible for justice to be meted out to the claimants. While the attitude to the American lawyers is understandable, it is a matter of regret that the government of India was persuaded to take such a stand which is tantamount to bringing the legal system of India into disrepute.

British System

To call the Indian legal system deficient or inadequate is gratuitous denigration. The Indian legal system is essentially based upon the common law of the United Kingdom. Our civil procedure, the law of torts, the law of evidence, and the criminal code are all based upon the British system. There is a basic similarity in essentials between the American legal system and the Indian legal system, since they both have had their origin in the jurisprudence of the United Kingdom.

A legal system is not a structure of fossils but is a living organism which grows through the judicial process and statutory enactments. Thus in course of time systems which were once similar become different in some respects. We do not have the jury system in India in civil or criminal matters, nor do we have the type of "discovery" which is a speciality of the American procedure. While it is true to say that the Indian system today is different in some respects from the American system, it is wholly untrue to say that it is deficient or inadequate. Difference is not to be equated with deficiency.

The Indian legal system does not provide an identical forum—identical to the American forum; but it does provide an adequate alterna-

repairs but structural alteration.

In the words of Justice A.N. Sen, "there was no lacuna or defect in section 80J prior to the impugned amendment and the section which was perfectly valid granted relief in clear and unambiguous language to the assessee in respect of capital employed, whether the assessee's own or borrowed, in an undertaking which qualified for relief under the section. The rule-making authority by framing an invalid rule sought to deny the assessee the benefit of the relief lawfully and validly granted by the section. The rule was contrary to the clear provisions of the statute and the invalid rule has been rightly struck

The charge that the Indian judiciary is not "innovative" is baseless. To say that our Supreme Court is super-innovative would be closer to truth. There is no doubt that the Indian judicial system can fairly and satisfactorily handle the Bhopal litigation. The only thing special about these cases is the number of claimants; but that can hardly be treated as a factor which puts the cases beyond the competence of Indian judges. After all, mass tort is merely a species of mass litigation. And Indian courts have admirably handled even those cases of mass litigation which affected the lives and destinies of millions.

The gas plant disaster at Bhopal was an unmitigated tragedy. The plant itself was the product of highly complex technology, but complexity of the technology cannot be equated with complexity of legal issues. The principles of liability and damages involved in the Bhopal cases are all well established in India. The complexity is not in the nature or determination of legal issues but in the application of the law to the events which took place in Bhopal. Well settled law is to be applied to an unusual occurrence.

To say that the Indian bar is ill-equipped to deal with the Bhopal cases is a slanderous reflection on the legal profession in India, unredeemable by the plea of truth.

There are 2,50,000 lawyers in India. They constitute an all India bar—in other words, any of them is entitled to appear in the Bhopal case.

A galaxy of talent is available to the claimants in India. Several lawyers have expressed their willingness to assist the claimants in India without charging any fees. I am proud to say that the tradition of public service still animates the Indian bar—five major constitutional cases, each of which lasted over some months, were argued in the Supreme Court for the citizen by the bar without charging any fees, even when the clients were so wealthy as the 14 leading banks and the maharajas. There are nobler spurs to professional excellence than contingency fees.

Mass Tort

One of the "shortcomings" alleged against the Indian bar is that there are no tort "specialists" among Indian lawyers. It is true that the Indian bar does not display that degree of specialisation which often spells commercialisation—the degree of specialisation which made a famous American remark (of physicians) that a specialist in diseases of the left leg will not treat diseases of the right. But are we sure that a general counsel is less useful to society than a specialist in ambulance-chasing? Again, can a legal firm be said to be ill-equipped to deal with mass litigation because

some medical expenses defrayed by employers, or the concessional rates of interest on which loans are given by employers to meet the crying need of housing, and irrationally disallowing to the taxpayer 15 per cent of the interest paid on public deposits and 20 per cent of the expenditure on advertisements.

To tax and to please is not given to men; but to tax and be fair is. It is impossible to expect from the people good faith and acceptance of their moral duty to pay taxes, unless the government first proves itself to be fair, considerate and reasonable.

other provisions, "all the law in force in the territory of India immediately before the commencement of this constitution shall continue in force therein until altered or repealed or amended by a competent legislature or other competent authority".

Therefore, to say that the Indian law of torts is inadequate or inadequately evolved, is tantamount to saying that the UK law of torts is inadequate or inadequately evolved.

India has codified laws regarding anti-pollution, environment control, industrial safety, hazardous waste etc. The Indian system is undoubtedly capable of evolving the law to cope with advances in technology in the unfolding future. If the Bhopal litigation represents an opportunity for the further development of tort law in India, that chance should not be denied to India merely because some might say that the American legal system is ahead in development.

The charge of inordinate delays in the administration of justice in India would be perfectly valid in a treatise dealing with the Indian legal system. But it is wholly inapt and untenable as regards the Bhopal case.

Speedy Handling

The special law passed by the Parliament of India, the Bhopal Gas Leak Disaster (Processing of Claims) Act 1985, and the scheme framed thereunder, enact specific and well-conceived measures to deal with the cases "speedily, effectively, equitably and to the best advantage of the claimants". The Bhopal Act by itself is wholly sufficient to insulate Bhopal claimants from the law's proverbial delays. There is no "inadequacy" or "deficiency" in the Indian legal system which cannot be set right by the government of India within a matter of days. The Bhopal Act is a good example of how innovative the government itself can be when it comes to dealing with an unparalleled situation. Under our well settled law, the government can set up, and has on several occasions set up, a special tribunal, and cases can be assigned to a special judge to ensure their speedy handling.

The year that has rolled by since the tragedy occurred leaves no doubt that the unprecedented Bhopal case will receive unprecedented treatment in India. The government has already taken the unusual step of substituting itself in place of all claimants and of organising legal redress in a manner which would be difficult to improve upon. The claimants have no less a champion than the sovereign Union government. It would be ludicrous to suggest that when these very cases have been chosen by the government for exceptional protection under its wing, the government feel



An impotent Government

AN Englishman's house may or may not be his castle, but the Secretariat of any government worth the name is rated as its impregnable citadel housing its top brass. That myth has been exploded in Uttar Pradesh which has scored yet another U.P. 'first'. The walls of Jericho, so the legend goes, fell at the bugle blast. The prestige of the Government of Uttar Pradesh, assuming it can still be called a government, crumbled to dust when its own security guards in the newly-constructed mini Secretariat building — a show-piece in architecture — went on a rampage for two days running, raucously pressing their demand to have recourse to the lynch law to avenge a private feud. It would appear that the security guards are the biggest threat to the security of the State Secretariat and its top personnel. What triggered off the stupendous unrest was the alleged abduction and sale of an 18-year-old daughter of a Security Guard by a pseudo-journalist. If the charge is proved, the guilty party should be severely punished. No mercy can be shown to a moral leper of this type. But no person or body of persons can be allowed to take the law into their own hands and lynch a suspect after holding him in forcible detention and beating him up before his trial in a kangaroo court dead set on his execution.

Admittedly, when passions are roused or inflamed by interested parties, the people are inclined to run berserk. This is where the custodians of law and order step in and see to it that there is no violent transgression of the law of the land. The custodians, in turn, depend on the rulers and policy-makers for their protection and the enforcement of legal provisions. It is shocking to record that the people of Uttar Pradesh, and specially those living in the capital city, were treated for two unforgettable days to the shameful spectacle of the fumbling antics of an impotent government that seemingly cannot perform. When a small police party arrived on the first day to rescue the suspect from his captors thirsting for his blood, they were mobbed and beaten up by the Security Guards. When a senior police officer was being severely manhandled by the rampaging rioters and the small police party was in danger of being overwhelmed by the surging crowd, a police constable reportedly fired in the air to scare away the violent demonstrators. The angry crowd, according to reports, stormed into the room of the Home Secretary, smashed the furniture and repeated the operations in the office room of the Secretary of Secretariat Administration after cutting his telephone line and left the place in a shambles. The two Secretaries concerned were also manhandled. It was reported that the Chief Secretary was in his office but he did not stir out of the room. Not one minister or even a State minister came to the scene of the occurrence either on the first or the second day when the rowdy guards doled out the mixture as before to the police and seriously injured a Reserve Inspector, who earlier had played a prominent part in releasing the suspect from their clutches. And all the time the Government of Uttar Pradesh kept dithering in a jittery state. The constable who had fired in the air to scare away the crowd was reportedly sent to the lines denigrating both him and the entire Police Force in the eyes of the people and striking at the morale of the Force.

The Security Guards concerned reportedly have the run of the place and are demanding "stern action" against the police. Pride of place for a government that just cannot govern even in its own citadel now goes not to Bihar, rated till the other day as the most mismanaged and inept State in the Indian Union, but to the stately State of Uttar Pradesh, allegedly the home State of the Prime Minister. It is the misfortune of about 100 million people inhabiting the State that they are saddled with a government that can neither govern nor will it get out, giving them at least the satisfaction to fend for themselves in any crisis. In Uttar Pradesh the Hobbesian nightmare of a primitive State where life is nasty, brutish and short seems to have turned into a stark reality.

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displaying both statesmanship and an exquisite sense of timing. France has now taken the position that since it is only substituting the United States in the 1963 Indo-U.S. agreement, it does not have to impose the conditions prescribed by the London Club. There will be no bar on reprocessing of spent fuel and India will be able to undertake it in terms of the 1963 Indo-U.S. agreement and the 1971 U.S.-India-IAEA trilateral agreement. The latest Indo-French accord has not only removed a major irritant but set a shining example of understanding and co-operation between developed and developing countries. Apart from the mutual advantages that will accrue from the agreement, the tremendous goodwill it has generated will ensure closer co-operation in various other fields.

West Asia imbroglio

○ NCE again it is being demonstrated in strife-torn West Asia with Kaleidoscopic changes that there are no permanent enemies or permanent friends but only permanent interests. Yasser Arafat, the indomitable P.L.O. leader who by a quirk of fate finds himself estranged from many of his erstwhile followers, has been confounded by a surprise attack on him by Syria. President Assad of Syria, who till the other day was backing Arafat up to the hilt, has turned on him not to settle any old scores, imaginary or otherwise, but negotiate a better settlement for Syria with Israel, its traditional enemy, over the Golan Heights. Both Asad and Colonel Gaddafi seem to have joined hands in running down Arafat as a 'softie', if not a traitor, where Israel is concerned. Frantically Arafat is signalling to all his friends, including Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and other non-aligned Heads of Government, to strengthen his hands in retrieving his lost position as the supreme P.L.O. leader.

Bluntly he has accused Syria of "shooting us in the back". In an interview with the press in Lebanon, the PLO chief said: "I am sorry to say that we have been betrayed. We were together preparing to face the Israeli aggressor and suddenly they shot us in the back." His position is undoubtedly an embarrassing one. Despite all sacrifices and the outstanding courage displayed by the P.L.O. under his leadership, there has been so far no tangible gains for the guerillas. They had to withdraw from Beirut and they have been scattered all over the place, including Syria where the guerillas have been led to believe that it was Arafat who betrayed them.

A negotiated settlement with Israel by the P.L.O. under Arafat is anathema both to Colonel Gaddafi of Libya and President Assad of Syria. The Syrians feel that Israel will never withdraw from the Golan Heights once it has made peace with the P.L.O. Arafat's pathetic faith in the Reagan Plan with its specious promise of carving out a Palestinian homeland on the West Bank of Jordan has cost him dear. Progressively he finds himself alienated both from the extremist elements in the 'Al Fatah' group as well as from some of his erstwhile supporters like Syria and Libya. Under pressure, the P.L.O. leader is now speaking truculently once again about the need to wage "an all-out war against Israel". But it is a sad thought that his credibility has been heavily eroded, even in his own camp.

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Indira's new thrust

A CHAIN is as strong as its weakest link. No government, however strong, can possibly deliver the goods or be acceptable to the people for any length of time if it is eroded by corruption at any vital level. To our shame and discomfiture we have to admit that not only the Government but the country itself is pock-marked with corruption at virtually all levels. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has at long last realised that a seemingly strong and arbitrary government is no substitute for a clean and good government. The Congress(I) debacle in the South has driven the lesson home that the people, by and large, however docile and patient, will not tolerate any more the continuance of a corrupt administration lorded over by corrupt rulers. The Prime Minister's whirlwind campaign in Andhra during the crucial election did not bear any fruit as the people were no longer in a mood to be fobbed off by exhortations and appeals.

Mrs. Gandhi's silence on issues like misrule and corruption in Andhra and Karnataka came in for a lot of angry criticism from the local people. A spot observer made this pertinent comment: "The average citizen of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, who had suffered considerably from the incompetence, high-handedness and corrupt practices of successive State governments, expected her to promise that she stood not only for a strong but a clean administration." Aware of her lapse, Indira Gandhi's main thrust is now on "streamlining efficiency and rooting out corruption from the administrative apparatus to improve its image". In a strongly-worded directive addressed to all her ministers and Chief Ministers in the States, Mrs. Gandhi has emphasised that a nation's image is to a large extent formed by the functioning of the government officers. This is no great discovery.

Bureaucracy is the main instrument for the functioning of the government. Today the very term 'bureaucracy' has a stinking connotation. It conjures up sloth, rudeness, corruption and malperformance. But how can it be otherwise under the present dispensation? A spade does not work. It is the man behind the spade that is primarily responsible for its performance. When the ministers and assorted policy-makers, further reinforced by professional influence-peddlars in the ruling party's hierarchy, encourage directly or indirectly corruption, financial and other irregularities and treat the officers either as their standard-bearers or undeclared chieftains of their "private army", how can Indira Gandhi's government project a clean image? Bihar, for instance, is a cesspool of corruption. Even Congress(I) dissidents have been demanding the removal of the Chief Minister whom they regard as the fountainhead of corruption and misrule, and still Dr. Jagannath Mishra continues to enjoy the confidence, if not the esteem, of the Prime Minister. Similarly, it is the Centre which tried to shield Antulay when he was exposed in his true colours and but for the High Court judgment, Antulay and his henchmen would still have been on the rampage in Maharashtra.

Sycophants, time-servers, trimmers and other assorted members of a corrupt breed in the administration have not been slow to take the cue from their masters. The result is there for all to see. It was said of the old Indian Civil Service of the British days that it was neither Indian nor civil nor permeated with any sense of service. Today the majority of our servicemen have the same attributes except that they are Indian by birth. It is axiomatic that no progress is possible at any level in a government "sold" to socialism unless there is a clean, intelligent and efficient administration. But no useful purpose will be served by placing the cart before the horse. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi should first apply herself to the herculean task of cleaning the Augean stables of corrupt, arrogant and malperforming ministers and other "top politicians" crowding her bandwagon. Only then will it be possible to give the present lacklustre and corrupt administration the much-needed face-lift to make it acceptable to a long-suffering people.

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BETWEEN THE LINES

AFTER MRS. GANDHI WHAT?

By KULDIP NAYAR

MRS GANDHI had two options; she could have gone in for a mid-term poll to encash whatever is left of her popularity or she could have made an effort to patch her party image. She has opted for the second. Mr. Sitaram Kesari, more loyal than the king set ball rolling and went from one minister to another to get his signature on a paper to enable the "respected leader" a free hand. Some ministers were unhappy over being hustled into a situation where they could not say 'no' more due to fear lest Mr. Kesari should report their predicament to her.

The impression spread by those who influence Gandhi's mind is that she has only to drop some cabinet ministers and pick up new faces to win back her popularity. And she too has made it known that she wants to meet the dissidents and others to find out what has gone wrong and wait till 1985 when elections are due.

What she does not realise is that the people are turning away from her not from ministers and Chief Ministers alone.

The electorate is yet confused and has not turned towards any particular party but it has given enough indications that its faith in her capacity and will to improve things has lessened quite a bit. Increasingly she has come to represent this status quo and that is the main reason why she did not get a majority in any one of the eight States, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, West Bengal, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tripura where the elections have been held in the past one year.

The formula of replacing a, b and c with d, e and f may not work because her party has become only a jostling crowd pushing each other for office; even talentwise the party is weak. It may sound harsh but Mr. Kamalapati Tripathi now does not represent change. Voters 60 per cent of whom are below 40 years do not get enthused over cosmetic changes Mrs. Gandhi's style of effecting reforms.

Interestingly, she has written a letter to the Chief Ministers to tackle corruption effectively while in the past she had gone on record as saying that corruption is a world phenomenon.

But every one knows that this spurt of "activity" may not last long because this is the ninth time when Mr. Tripathi has been picked up after being consigned to inactivity. Not long ago I met him. He was sitting all by himself. Since he was in a dog house those days, nobody would meet him in case Mrs. Gandhi came to know of it. I asked him whether it was the same Congress for which he

installing Kamaraj as Congress President or when he was teetering from the blow in NEFA at the hands of the Chinese in 1962. But Mrs. Gandhi has not faced even a fraction of that situation since her return to power. However the Kamaraj Plan did not refurbish the image of the Congress which lost the majority in States in the 1967 poll—the first after the Kamaraj Plan.

Even if Mrs. Gandhi carries out all the changes she has in her mind the question is whether she can govern till 1985. In the latter half of 1974 and the beginning of 1975 there were only a few "Young Turks" by her party and a dozen or so members of the opposition in Parliament to defy her. Still they may also fail. The snowballed disappointment then so-greater. And their system will increase the system will increase At present their is a declining ing that if men with commitments were to go. A second failure now in the opposition people thinking that system that gives rise to misrule and worse long been having time when extremist whether of the right or may begin to acquire The opposition cannot fail again. Those who made politics their business who have around them a whirl of scandal should be allowed to get the blame. This is the minimum in the opposition people who are beginning their faith in them at that moment.

I do not know if Gandhi is justified in the moment that some ministers as the State cabinet or the Pradesh and Karnataka given the Congress because they were governments should her to give proof. Mr NT Rama Rao in Pradesh and Mr Ramakrishna in Karnataka must that the future of the opposition depends on what they in their states in months.

It is also not impossible to imagine that the electorate returns one party from the opposition in such strength that it will be in a position to form the government itself at the Centre. Voters in India when tested have proved to be more discerning than their leaders have been. They did that in 1977 and 1980 and now by defeating Mrs. Gandhi's party in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka they have shown that they are quite mature in their judgement. In fact word had gone round in Karnataka two days before the polling day that vote should not be wasted and that it should be cast in favour of any candidate who could defeat Mrs. Gandhi's nominee.

My fear is not over a combination of parties coming to power at the Centre; it might even be better than a single party at the reins because it may begin an exercise at federalism. The Centre now has usurped too much power. The Congress because of its roots all over the country has smoothened provincial autonomy robbing the States

The Charade And The Grandeur

J. Nanporia

ostentation, effrontery, arrogant self-confidence, and an assured egotism. Some of these qualities helped to sustain the class structure in England itself and, when transplanted in an alien soil, were reinforced by the local taste for impressive display.

Oddly, there seems here to have been a meeting of the British and Afro-Asian minds, an unspoken acknowledgment by both sides that the gap between the appearance and the reality of power could be bridged or rather concealed by the grand manner. There was braggadocio at one end and stylish spectacle at the other by which the natives were supposed to be awed and impressed. But were they? In some degree they undoubtedly were, not least because though wholly disproportionate to its pretensions, British power was real enough. Yet there was surely on the part of the subjugated peoples an amiable willingness to participate in the fun, to applaud this theatre, to go along with the pretence, and to refuse to spoil the effect.

prayerful mood, so the act of the British performance engendered its own spirit. If there was calculation to begin with it was eventually replaced by conviction — of duty, mission, service, evangelism, succour and guidance for the less privileged. There were also the vices of these virtues, snobbery, racialism, conceit, prejudice and hypocrisy; but an act, if sustained, finally imposes a sense of obligation that demands fulfilment. The pretence had to merge into reality, often partially but as often successfully. And so with the flags, durbars, uniforms, protocol, government houses, pomp, ritual, and rigid hierarchical status symbols providing the framework, those virtues which the British of the nineteenth particularly esteemed were collectively enshrined as the ideal of imperial conduct.

Fair play, the Englishman's word, stiff upper lip, good form, the done thing, decency, square-jawed determination, pluck and seemingly reticence — evocations of public school, a subject for twenty-

ary, the greatly respected medical officer, the universally admired district commissioner, the devotion-attracting regimental commander, the integrity-bound judge, the character-moulding schoolmaster, and the loyal organist who played the organ at the local church for forty years.

The bungalows in which these people lived, the household arrangements that sustained their Britishness, the architecture that made their presence visible, the clubs and hill stations in which they sought mutual reassurance, all contributed to the overall imperial effect. They were elements in a style in the idiom of which many former colonial countries were frozen years after the British departed. The British in contrast had long defrosted themselves from this extravagant mode, and can now look back on it with laughter, amazement and not entirely concealed admiration. Jan Morris helps them to do this in this admirably written book, perceptive, ironical, evocative, humorous and compassionate. The text is well supported by old photographs and reproductions of prints and paintings that add their own brand of exotic impressionism, a visual record taken when the theatre was at its best, when one kind of Englishman had, unknown to himself, reached completion and was shortly to become extinct.

A photograph captioned "The Hunt, Somewhere in India", with its anonymity of place, has in particular something of the flavour of Jan Morris's theme. Hints of things that can still be recalled but are on the verge of being forgotten. On one point a reservation is called for: Jan Morris says these images of Empire are those which the world in general received as also the British who created them but not the then subjugated people of the colonies. Surely this is not correct. The impress of fin-de-siècle imperial style was never stronger than for the peoples among whom it developed, and if it was politically rejected it was not necessarily not understood. It was even sometimes enjoyed or marvelled at as one of the most fantastic plays ever mounted on the international stage. Echoes of it were heard the other day when an elderly butler at the Madras Club refused to meet visiting Englishmen because they were not properly dressed.

THE SPECTACLE OF EMPIRE:
By Jan Morris (Faber and Faber, £12.50)

Fair play, the Englishman's word, stiff upper lip, good form, the done thing, decency, square-jawed determination, pluck and seemingly reticence — evocations of public school, a subject for twentieth century hilarity and derision, but part of the spectacle of fin-de-siècle Empire. It was a case of an actor so thoroughly plunged in his role that he continued to act off the stage, and nowhere did the role and the man become so indistinguishably one as in places actually or metaphorically East of Suez.

For most Africans and Asians the uninvited presence of the British was an act of God, not something to get too intense about, and to be tolerated until it ended as it undoubtedly would. Psychologically, then, they were well conditioned to watch the British spectacle, when necessary to take part in it, to relish the finer nuances of its gestures, and to salute the traditions to which it gave rise. For the British it was a source from which their self-confidence could be replenished. Alternatively it was seen as a means by which to keep the natives in their places and ensure the survival of the Raj. The motives of this charade were mixed and seldom consciously examined. Yet, in the way that some-one kneeling is overcome by a

tieth century hilarity and derision, but part of the spectacle of fin-de-siècle Empire. It was a case of an actor so thoroughly plunged in his role that he continued to act off the stage, and nowhere did the role and the man become so indistinguishably one as in places actually or metaphorically East of Suez. Bishops, policemen, traders, accountants, shopkeepers, railwaymen and officials, as they passed eastwards through the Canal, were seized in varying degrees by this tribal zeitgeist. The pro-consuls, generals and heroes were larger-than-life children of this spirit, creatures of legend as well as of history, but these apart there were those more modest prototypes that peopled the Indo-Anglian scene, the much loved mission-

and fought for nearly 60 years. His eyes came to his and he looked sadly towards me as that was his reply. Even letters to the Chief Ministers exhorting them to do this or that are not new. To shield a corrupt or an ineffective Chief Minister on the one hand and issue sermons on the other, do not go well. What Mrs. Gandhi is doing to her party has been compared with the Kamaraj Plan in 1963 when Nehru punished all those who had raised their heads against him when he was busy the Congress (I). When in power

An Open Letter

We reproduce a letter which we have received from one of our readers. The letter is unsigned. Normally we would not publish such a letter. But so impassioned is the writer's plea and of such national importance is the subject that we have decided to feature it prominently.

Dear Indiraji,

I am an ordinary Indian. I have no access to you. I have looked upon you as India's one hope. But my heart bleeds today. I am writing this open letter to you in the hope that I shall be able to reach you.

I would not have asked for this indulgence if I were not convinced that the country is in mortal peril and that you have the capacity to avert a disaster only if you are willing to bestir yourself. This is a cry of anguish. I hope you will heed it.

I know "crisis" and "peril" are the staple of weak minds. Our journalists who know little about the country and its history have worked these to death. But you will agree that in the present case, it is not an exaggeration to talk of crisis or of peril.

Our history bears testimony to the fact that whenever central authority weakens, the country falls a prey to marauders from outside and inside. The fall of the Mughal empire was, for example, followed by the sack of Delhi by Nadir Shah and the rise of the thugs. Our children do not even know what the word "thug" stands for. The desperadoes who killed, raped and looted at will till they were put down by the British numbered not hundreds but hundreds of thousands.

Your great father was a keen student of history. He knew what hell the Indian people had gone through for want of a strong authority. This searing knowledge explains the devotion with which he sustained the fabric of the Indian state.

I do not know whether you, too, have paid any attention to India's terrible history. But permit me to mention just one additional fact. *Ain-i-Akbari* records that when that remarkable Emperor was trying to consolidate his empire, the private armies totalled four and a half million armed men against the 500,000 of his own. This is an indication of what we may be in for if the central authority continues to decline.

You have often drawn attention to external dangers. But



Your great father was a keen student of history. He knew what hell the Indian people had gone through for want of a strong authority.

you, too, have seldom referred to the dangers that lurk within the land. In the past, against one foreign invader, we had had 10 Indian marauders and we may witness the rise of such gangs again.

You may say that I am over-drawing the picture. I pray to God that my forebodings are ill-founded. But only fools can fail to disregard history. We should not invite disaster either through complacency, or lack of will, or failure of nerve. In you we have a leader who can see the country through the turbulent period ahead.

It is axiomatic that in moments of crisis only men and

women of faith can salvage the situation. So if you are to rise to the challenge, you *shall* have to demonstrate that you are a woman of faith who is prepared to stake everything for the future of the nation.

It has often been said of you that you have a fortress (siege) mentality and that you see yourself beleaguered all the time. I do not know how true this view is. But men and women of destiny cannot afford to give way to such tendencies. They do not retreat behind fortified walls to listen to the tales and gossip of sycophantic, scheming and dishonest courtiers. Instead, they go out

self to be surrounded by hard-faced men who see politics in the arithmetic of castes and communities and money. Such men learn from experience. You shall have to send them where they

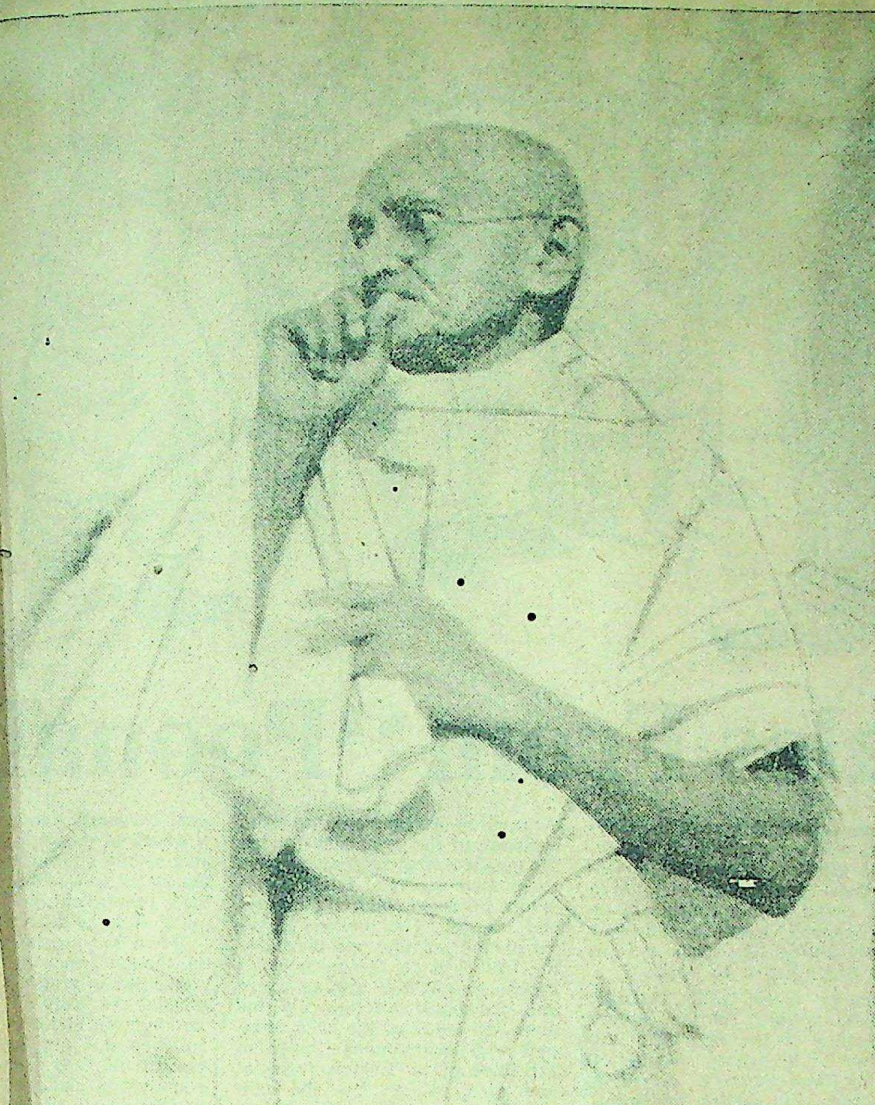
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AGAINST VIOLENCE: Gandhiji knew his scriptures all too well when he propagated the fine of non-violence. And this he did because he knew his people equally well.

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I am certain that everyone who has bothered to read this far can quote often from bitter experience examples of this destructive force that grinds away in envy and jealousy in the hearts and minds of certain personalities. Such people are obsessive and single-minded in their destructive role. They invariably make life and work untenable. When that personality is small and petty, the devious means of gaining power or position is achieved by appearing to be humble, hard-working, eager to serve, energetic, subservient to everybody, so that more and more trust and responsibility is given to them. "Such a hard worker", "So willing" etc. Carefully building up this image, especially the cheerful readiness to do tedious jobs, others are lulled into believing that person to be loyal and trustworthy. Often nothing could be further from the truth. In most cases the person with a violently, envious, jealous, possessive or acquisitive nature only uses his affability as a mask. They are skilful, Seraikala, Chatau dancers!

They bide their time. Sometimes years. To people in authority they are utterly loyal and dependable, even charming. But behind people's backs, little intrigues are set in motion. Weaknesses in others are noted and used. Little angers or slights are exploited skilfully against superiors. Before anyone realises what is happening, factions begin to develop. Colleagues are often at a loss to know what has changed the atmosphere of team work, the Espirit de corps which they prided themselves was the modern competent management organisations of their work and hopes. It is all rather like a marsh gas. Imperceptible, but eventually deadly.

versity or technical organisation where no labour or union trouble ever surfaced. But with the introduction of just one professor with political ambition, unions, class IV staff or students are drawn into situations of conflict and disruption which end by creating a new political leader — a champion of the down trodden!

Ironically, the "downtrodden" themselves never benefit by these actions, only the one who has exploited them and stepped on their bodies to raise himself to a position of power.

What the negative element amounts to is systematically building up a quiet power base for oneself. All the charm, the dawn-to-dusk concern for others, is nothing more than a termite mentality at work to establish one's own interests ruthlessly at the expense of others. Such a thing as real concern for the objectives of one's work, or loyalty to those who pay and employ you simply does not exist. Every waking moment is concerned with the self.

But beyond this is the curious mindlessness of all such actions. Good public services run by decent people, for they too exist, are all too often destroyed by these rodent personalities that form the hard core of the life-negating force that Schweitzer identified. May be he did not see it quite like this, but it is the effect of certain doctrines upon the minds of the purely materialistic hiding behind a tradition of spiritual values. Only now do I begin to understand the importance of his judgement. For from the inner sanctums of our so-called holy places, to the secular sanctums of official and non-official offices, this poisonous type of personality is at work. It only needs one of these such

country back from what could have been thirty-five years of extraordinary national development. This is the principal element that has led to corruption and our continuing backwardness and poverty. It is also responsible for many of our best scientists and academicians fleeing to other countries. All this represents loss to India. But everywhere we have to face a far greater loss in the sheer blocking and delaying tactics that these negative forces in our society impose upon all action, all development, and even upon decency and grace in our dealings with each other.

Whether it is a ward boy in a hospital or a Municipal employee or a clerk in a cargo department of an airline, whatever lies within their power to exploit for some personal gain, will be done with total and ruthless disregard for others. A ward boy can withhold a bed pan unless paid. A municipal or public utility employee can issue false bills and tell people to come back again and again on one excuse or another until they get the bribe that will resolve the deliberately created problem. A cargo department of an airline can send you from pillar to post just to collect a parcel that should promptly be handed over the counter. In fact, a survey should be done to trace the turnover factor in every public office and examine in depth every employee's rejoinder of 'come tomorrow, come next week, next year'!

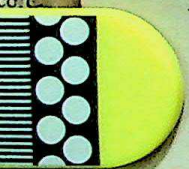
A Point Of Despair

Though these issues of corruption and exploitation on the one hand and killer instincts on the other may not seem to be related, they are actually part of a blight in our public life that has corroded the foundation of our country to such an extent, many people are now reaching a point of despair. It is only the silent majority, today almost a separate India that carries on firmly believing in our innate capacity for both solidarity and common sense. This is becoming increasingly evident among the younger generation whose education has brought them out of the miasma of the past, out of the phoney spirituality that is only a cover-up for self interest and even brutality.

Heinrich Zimmer in his masterly analysis of Indian thought has said, "There is some secret safety even in the disorderliness of natural occurrences, some hidden power that creates surpassing balances which keep the car of destiny from being finally overturned and smashed." This hidden power is our only hope. While we are facing an undoubted dilemma in India and a new form of gun-toting violence behind which lies the negative and the mindless and the wilfully destructive; somehow a kind of divine equilibrium come to our rescue, sometimes only just in time.

One cannot help thinking wistfully, however, what a magnificent country this could be if we could be free of those random personalities whose hatred, negative drives and power-hunger have set the clock back and whose "killer instincts" have already destroyed so much. The Rig Veda concept of the world was a family of human kind. But Gandhiji knew his scriptures all too well when he propagated the doctrine of non-violence. And this he did because he knew his people equally well. There is no "family" or "human kind" possible in India until we identify the "killers" in our midst, see them for what they are, stop their corrosive actions, so that they cannot become leaders of hate power. After all, it is in the decent and peaceful

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A Comparison

By RAMJI SAHAY

IN recent years, the comparative study of Chinese and Indian economic development has been receiving increasing attention. The initial conditions in both the countries during 1950-52 were more or less similar. Per capita output of food-grains in China was about 25 per cent higher than India's, though the per capita output of finished steel, pig iron, electric power, cement, cotton, textile and sugar was higher in India.

In the sixties, various assessments of the performance of the Chinese economy made by different sources indicated that its annual rate of growth was averaging 3 to 4 per cent. For example, my own study of the Chinese economy during the period 1952-67 revealed a growth rate exactly similar to that of India between 1950-51 to 1967-68, i.e. 3.8 per cent. Dr Subramanian Swamy found the Indian rate of growth of NDP for the period 1952-56 to 1961-65 to be 3.6 per cent, or higher than the corresponding Chinese rate of 3 per cent. For the period 1952-56 to 1970 he found the Chinese rate to be still lower at 2.3 per cent. Dr K.N. Raj also felt that growth rates in the two economies during 1952-65 to be close to each other. The publications of the Joint Economic Committee of the U.S. Congress (USCJEC) have also made a significant contribution to our knowledge of the Chinese economy for that period and later.

Price Analysis

In the seventies, western assessments were revised upwards. This led Dr S. Swamy to observe that "the propensity among scholars to now accept Chinese data without proper price analysis of the scope, neatness and valuation concepts underlying them has vastly increased". Mr Arthur Ashbrook in his USCJEC paper of 1972 estimated the average annual growth rate in China between 1952-67 to be 3.9 per cent. In another paper in 1975 he pushed this figure to 5.5 per cent. This exercise was repeated by other scholars in the West. Most of the estimates relating to the Chinese economy made in the late seventies hover around the figure of 5.6 per cent. Annual per capita income increase was estimated to be in the range 3.3 to 4.5 per cent depending upon what methodology was used particularly when it came to judging the size of the population. But clearly, even the lowest per capita figure was quite favourable.

Very recently the World Bank in its World Development Report (WDR) has been releasing figures on the Chinese economy. However, it has also revised downwards its own assessment of Chinese economic development. In the first report it pointed out that during 1957-79, Chinese per capita product grew twice as fast as India's, the respective rates being 2.7 and 1.4 per cent a year. It estimated Chinese per capita income at \$256 in 1979 as against \$190 in India. India had a per capita income of \$60 in 1950 and China 50 only. In its subsequent report, in 1982, the World Bank estimated that both started from \$160 in 1955. In 1980, Chinese per capita income stood at \$290 as against \$240 for India. As Mr Dilip Mukerjee reported in *The Times of India* (October 8, 1982) "the economic gap between India and China has turned out to be much smaller than was customarily assumed a few years ago".

Growth Rate

Between 1950-51 the Indian economy grew at a rate of around 3.5 per cent, which is significantly lower than the

estimates put forward by some western scholars which were based on estimates of a lower rate of growth of population.

Cropped Area

Coming to agricultural production in China, Mr Ashbrook's (1975) estimate at 2.4 per cent during 1952-74 is not different from the Indian figure. Even the World Development Report's estimate at 2.3 per cent per annum for the period 1957-79 is quite close to this assessment. However, the similarity of performance on the agricultural front conceals the fact that China started with a highly unfavourable landman ratio relative to India and it has long been cultivating land more intensively than U.S. Clearly, it has been more difficult for China to raise output which had to come exclusively from rise in yield per unit of land whereas, in India, at least, in the first decade, a substantial part of the rise in agricultural output came from the increase in area cropped. Thus in 1952, China had cultivated 107.9 million hectares to India's 118.7 million hectares. But when it came to comparison of degree of multiple cropping, irrigation, use of fertilisers, the Chinese record was considerably superior.

The much larger application of inputs per unit of land in China in the initial year explained their relatively higher yield. The use of chemical fertilisers per unit of land has been raised further and this has been made possible by the import of 13 large chemical fertiliser plants by China. In 1977, China had been using 64 kg of chemical nutrients per arable hectare as against only 25 kg in India. In China, the average fertiliser application per hectare of land again doubled in the three years 1977-80. According to the WDR, it rose further from 64 kg per hectare to 128 kg as against 31 kg in India in 1980-81. Between 1960 and 1980, China brought 30 million hectares under irrigation via pumps thus raising the ratio of irrigated to total cultivable land to 45 per cent as against 27 per cent in India. According to the WDR, 1982, China has been able to raise this ratio further to 50 per cent as against 28 per cent in India. Increased mechanisation has been another factor contributing to rise in yield. The number of medium and large tractors rose during 1977-80 to 745,000.

Manipulation

Manipulation of the terms of trade in China in favour of the rural sector has provided a stimulus for raising output in this sector. The index of purchase price of farm products in 1974, with 1952 as base, stood at 164.4 as against 100.3 as the index of industrial goods sold in the rural areas. The tax burden on agricultural output was reduced from 12 per cent in 1952 to 5 per cent in 1975. The index of real wages of industrial workers in the state sector stood at 119 in 1975 (1952-100) as against 126 for all workers in 1971. Improvement in the terms of trade during 1952-74 added more than 10,000 million yuan to farm purchasing power. Since 1979 farmers have been offered "20 per cent increase for the basic quota of grain to be delivered to the state for national distribution and a 50 per cent premium on top of it for above quota supply". The state has not raised the quota.

The cultivated area per person dependent on agriculture in China in 1978 was only 0.12 hectares compared to 0.42 in India (WDR, 1980). In future, it will be more difficult for China even to maintain this growth rate of agricultural production, as yields have already reached a high level. This point has been rightly

India And China: Comparison

RAMJI SAHAY

report newspapers and hard-hitting opposition parties to force a change as would clearly be the case in India. Indeed, there was little general knowledge of the famine conditions in China during 1959-61, though there were many rumours going abroad. The terrible facts have been acknowledged officially only very recently nearly two decades after the event. And only following a political change, leading to a regime critical of past leadership, battling opposition parties and newspapers play in India a protective role which seems to have been altogether absent in China.

'Statistical Fiasco'

Presumably, Dr Sen seems to imply that this is inherent in the Chinese political system. One may contest this view. The starvation deaths were most probably the result of excesses of the great leap forward and the commune system. It is well known that during GLF and the creation of communes, the statistical machinery slipped away from the hand of the state statistical bureau and consequently, statistics relating to 1958 and 1959 were highly unreliable. The "statistical fiasco" is clear from the fact that grains output was originally claimed to have risen from 185 million tons in 1957 to 375 million tons in 1958 and target of 525 million tons was set for 1959. Later, the claim for 1958 was reduced to 250 million tons. The fact that there has been no further starvation deaths in China after 1961 even during the cultural revolution or during the bagricultural years, leads one to conclude that starvation deaths in China during 1959-61 were the result of dislocation caused by the GLF and hectic establishment of communes and should not be regarded as inherent in the Chinese political system.

The evaluation of Chinese economic performance has thus been subject to continuous revision both upward and downward. The contrast with India is more marked in the sphere of industrial development with respect to reduction of inequalities and poverty; and with respect to the degree of self-reliance. Even the roughly similar agricultural growth rate should not blind us to the fact that China started with a highly unfavourable land-man ratio, and a high initial yield of crops. However, one must admit that the Chinese economy is yet to open itself fully to the outside world and one should be prepared for further surprises. World Bank reports in coming years will, one hopes, reveal more about the state of the Chinese economy.

(Concluded)

Zero hour in Punjab

THE adjournment motion on the Punjab issue was, as expected, rejected by the Lok Sabha with a thundering Voice vote. With the Congress-(I) enjoying a steamroller majority, the Opposition could only register a token protest. But the time is long past for taking a much-can-be-said-on-both-sides attitude on the Akali issue. The country is threatened with dismemberment. The Longowal group, with a Khomeini-like Bhindranwale angrily breathing down its neck, has for all practical purposes caved in under the intimidatory and pressure tactics of the extremists. However much Sant Longowal and his so-called moderate followers might equivocate over their constantly shifting stand, it is abundantly clear what the hawks in the Akali camp are demanding—call it Khalistan or a separate Sikh State—at gun point.

The leadership of the Akalis has apparently slipped from Sant Longowal's hands. On paper the Akali agitation was suspended till August 15 but in reality the agitation has been intensified. The cult of the assassin is rapidly gaining ground. In Amritsar a constable was shot dead and a head constable was murderously assaulted with an iron rod by an armed group which opened fire on the police party. Two days later the terrorists attacked an Air Force officer and his family at Pathankot with grenades. In yet another abominable outrage, a man recovering from gunshot injury at a hospital in Amritsar was again shot at three times by two assassins. This by no means completes the tally of outrages. The list keeps lengthening. Instead of condemning these outrages and helping the authorities in flushing out the killers and hoodlums from the sacred gurdwaras, where these anti-social elements have found ready refuge, Sant Longowal and his men seem to have taken a Trappist vow by maintaining silence over this campaign of terror and have sternly prohibited entry into the gurdwaras by the authorities for picking up the wanted men.

The Centre's warnings, appeals and exhortations have proved to be mainly counter-productive. The extremists, emboldened by Government's inaction or at best token action, have tried to bludgeon the moderate elements among the Akalis into submission. Despairing of any determined purposive action by the authorities, a fairly large segment of the population in the affected area, especially in the Jullundur belt, are planning a mass exodus to save their lives if not property. A number of persons frightened out of their wits have already moved to Delhi. The ominous threat of direct action by the extremists is reminiscent of the rumblings of the pre-partition days which culminated in an appalling holocaust.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has now gone on record with the unequivocal statement that the terrorist activities in Punjab will be dealt with sternly and the situation in the State would not be allowed to drift. If words have any meaning, this implies that the Centre has now made up its mind finally for a crackdown on the terrorists, the pseudo-secessionists and the insurgent Khalistanis in a come-what-may spirit. The Opposition parties, if they really want an end to disorder and insurgency in Punjab, should support the Centre stoutly and unequivocally on this score. Lok Dal leader Charan Singh, who is all for stern action, must stop sniping at Mrs. Gandhi to vent his spleen. This is no time for settling old personal scores. The Opposition and the ruling party are all equally involved in the deliberately tangled-up Punjab issue. They will all get hurt and hurt plenty along with the entire nation if they fail to rise in this hour of supreme crisis over their inhibitions, prejudices and partisan passions.

BETWEEN THE LINES

CHINA'S MOUNTAINS AND MOLE-HILLS

By KULDIP NAYAR

GOOD augury for India-China relations is Peking's realisation that it over-reacted to the participation of the cultural troupe from Arunachal in Asiad. China admitted this to India's ambassador in Peking, Mr. Venkateshwar, who in turn has informed New Delhi of this. China holds Arunachal to be 'a disputed territory' and feels that it protest when Arunachal is paraded as a part of the Indian Union at international gatherings. The emphasis is on international gatherings; in the Republic Day parade a float from Arunachal is included and the Chinese ambassador present on the occasion has never been seen to wince yet alone protest or walk out or protest when it goes past him.

China's sensitiveness over Arunachal is not new. In October 1961, when the Arunachal Speaker was included in a delegation to a family planning conference in Peking, it first refused to give him a visa and issued an entry permit later when the matter got magnified into a diplomatic "incident".

For China, making mountains out of molehills is a matter of policy and it suspects that India also does the same. I was in Peking at the time of the 1961 "incident" and when I asked Mr Han Nian-long, then First Deputy Foreign Minister, the reasons for objecting to the inclusion of the Arunachal Speaker in the delegation, I recall that he was furious.

He said: "These are petty tactics, the familiar manoeuvres which the Indian government has employed in the past." I told him that from what I knew about the functioning in New Delhi, where the left hand often did not know what the right hand did, the whole thing could not be part of any grand design. He did not agree with me.

Later, when Mr. KS Bajpai who was then the envoy in Peking and who is now leading the Indian delegation to the talks, asked me whether I knew whose idea it was to include the Arunachal Speaker in the team for the family planning conference, my fears were confirmed.

I am sure that the inclusion of the Arunachal culture troupe in the Asiad pageantry was not meant to be an affront to the Chinese, although they characterised it as "bad behaviour". But used to their own devious diplomacy, it may be difficult for them to comprehend that India was not trying to score a point. It was only when India cancelled the visit of the Dr. Kotnis delegation to China that Peking realised that it had gone too far.

significant that the Beijing Review, an official Chinese weekly, said in a recent issue that "this (border) problem should be settled as quickly as possible for the cause of peace in Asia and the world as a whole."

That means Peking does recognise that without a settlement the border dispute between India and China can endanger world peace. Nehru too had written in one of his hitherto unpublished fortnightly letters to the state chief ministers that 'in hostilities between India and China lay the seeds of a world war with the vast destruction and even annihilation'.

But the way the delegations of the two countries have proceeded with negotiations does not indicate any sense of the urgency with which the problem requires to be tackled. No purpose is served by New Delhi's insistence that Peking should withdraw the Chinese forces from all the areas occupied after the 1962 hostilities; India knows that China will not.

The crux of the problem is the Aksai Chin, which gives China access to its Sinkiang province.

The question that New Delhi has to pose itself is whether it should continue to demand the vacation of the Chinese from Aksai Chin as part of the border dispute settlement. Even those who are not experts on China will concede that the Aksai Chin is more important for China than for India, and it is really a disputed territory.

Package deal

The package deal that China has offered—China's recognition for the MacMahon Line for India's acceptance of the territory Peking occupies in the Ladakh section—is not a "take it or leave it" proposal. True, it has been made clear to the Indian delegation that the Aksai Chin is not negotiable. But there are indications that Peking might be prepared to give some territory in the western sector, that is, the Ladakh side, in addition to according recognition of the MacMahon Line in the east, in exchange for the Aksai Chin. Why not make a compromise?

Three years before the hostilities broke out between India and China in 1962, a "solution" of the border issue was suggested by Krishna Menon, then Defence Minister, but he was opposed by Govind Balabh Pant, then Home Minister, whose Press Officer I was at that time. Menon had told Chen Yi, then China's Foreign Minister, that India might accept Peking's suzerainty over the area in the Aksai Chin where it had built the road to link Sinkiang and Tibet as well as over a ten-mile strip to serve as a buffer to the road. In ex-

kilometres, and at the same time claims to much larger territory besides giving up claims to such danger areas it believes to be under Indian "occupation"—the nation should seriously consider whether it is not better to accept it than to continue to take an "all or nothing" attitude.

PM's Statement

In an interview this month with South, a third world magazine from London, Mrs. Gandhi has said that she can take care of Parliament's resolution provided China is willing to make concession. She may find this difficult, particularly now when her position has been weakened by the poll results in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. And the brief given to the Indian delegation was also limited. One of its members said before leaving for Peking that 'there is a long way to go.' Probably so, but it also confirms the belief that the talks are going on at a leisurely pace. It would have been better if the delegation had been authorised to negotiate the exchange of the Aksai Chin for part of the territory which the Chinese occupy in the western sector.

Even if Peking were to withdraw by 20 kilometres from the claim line in 1959 in the Ladakh sector, as the Colombo proposals envisaged, a settlement might begin to be in sight.

Peking wants to be a member of the third world movement. It has hinted that it would like to have its observers at the non-aligned summit in New Delhi in March and the third world peace prize is being given (to the Rice Institute headed by Mr. Swaminathan, former Planning Commission member.) in Peking.

The last time the function was in New Delhi and China has gone out of its way to woo the organisers to have Peking chosen as venue for the prize award.

This means Peking has come a long way from Nehru's interpretation of China's motive for the 1962 invasion: "India is the chief non-aligned country in the world. If India could be humiliated and defeated, the policy of non-alignment and peaceful co-existence would have proved a failure... The removal of India as a power which has influenced policies and which has become an obstacle in the way of China becoming a great power, was the primary objective of Chinese policy, and the elimination of non-alignment became particularly important from China's viewpoint."

China's attitude to non-alignment has changed since. It is now taking a less belligerent stance. Even its hostility towards the Soviet Union is being curbed, though this may be partly only a reaction to the Reagan administration's military support.

- 6-00 p.m.—Chauri.
- 6-30—Char Ki Duniya.
- 1. Baba Saheb Bhanuben.
- 2. Cake Banayen.
- 7-00—Beta! English Film.
- "I Love Lucy".
- 7-30—Pradeshik Samachar.
- 7-40—Aapki Dastak.
- 7-55—Kade Aur Kruti.
- 8-10—A programme on annual festival of Uttar Pradesh.

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Rajiv's acid test

THE common gibe—some say the barbed dart—against Sanjay Gandhi was that he was the centre of extra-constitutional authority. If the powers-that-be are their way, that mistake will not be repeated here his elder brother and heir-apparent Rajiv Gandhi is concerned. It is no closely-guarded secret that under the present dispensation Rajiv is slowly but steadily being groomed for the job he is expected to shoulder in the days to come. Whatever the critics may say, seriously or sneeringly, about 'dynastic rule', there is no denying that a large segment of the population now regards Rajiv Gandhi as Indira Gandhi's natural successor to the Prime Minister's office. In any case, Rajiv has thrown or been persuaded to throw himself into the ring. He 'parachuted' from the air of his cockpit into the political arena after his younger brother's much more ambitious and tough brother's tragic death in an air crash. He is no 'natural' where politics is concerned. He is a poor speaker, does not yet know his ropes but he is a good organiser as was demonstrated in Asiad.

Unlike Sanjay, Rajiv was ushered into politics formally and through the open door. He was elected an M.P., was invested unofficially with the title of 'Clean', accompanied the Prime Minister to various 'foreign capitals' and was quietly rated as number 2 even by the super powers. But how will the young shape bereft of Indira's charismatic presence survive will have to make the grade the hard way through the rough and tumble of politics. That is why it has been made one of the principal General Secretaries of Congress (I) by Pandit Kamlapati Tripathi, the President of the party under the eagle-eyed supervision of the 'Supremo' who continues to be at the helm of affairs, both of the Government and the party. According to New Delhi advice, Mrs. Gandhi's stage was thinking of appointing Rajiv Gandhi as Congress (I) President. But it was felt that it would be more appropriate to let him work as one of the General Secretaries to gain the necessary experience before assuming the Presidentship of the party organisation. His 'performance test' is at hand. He has been entrusted with the task of looking after the organisational work of the party in Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh. Bihar will either like or mar Rajiv, the Congress (I) and even Indira.

This State is a cesspool of corruption, pock-marked by administrative misdeeds and the main stronghold of the underworld. Himself the epitome of all these depressing lapses, the present Chief Minister, Dr. Jagannath Mishra, has made a pretence of 'refurbishing' the tarnished image of his Government by appointing as many as 11 ministers, thereby provoking a backlash of the 'rebels' and the dissidents who are demanding his head on a charger.

The real test of Rajiv's capacity to cope with his present challenging assignment will be his ability to get Jagannath Mishra from office and instal a really honest man, freely elected by the legislators and not elected by a deeply entrenched caucus, as Chief Minister. It is to be hoped that Mrs. Gandhi has learnt a bitter lesson that it is one thing to tolerate incompetence and ignore corruption at times but another wholly reprehensible thing to defend the indolent and shield the dissolute under the mistaken notion that an attack on her minions was indeed an attack on her own leadership that must be met obstinately with all the resources at her command, even if it meant blatantly countenancing the gross inadequacies and misdeeds of some of her over-pampered colleagues. Rajiv is to succeed in the herculean task of cleaning Augean Stables in Bihar, he must have the unstinted support and blessings of the 'Supremo'. It is very much in the interest of 'dynastic rule' to ensure that 'Clean' comes into a clean legacy.

VIOLENCE breeds more violence. No wonder the anti-poll violence in Assam has touched off widespread communal riots in Assam. Rampaging mobs have burnt down whole villages. On the night of February 12, at least 50 people were killed in a massacre by armed gangs which raided villages in Darrang district. Homes belonging to 6,500 families were razed to the ground when raiders belonging to a particular political group set fire to them. For several days, spreading communal clashes, large-scale arson and killings had created a climate of terror with the result that only poor-to-moderate voting was recorded in the first round of the Assembly elections held on Monday. Repolling has been ordered at several places where the ballot boxes were forcibly removed and the polling booths burnt down.

There is no let-up in the killing spree and a Congress-I candidate was killed in a mob attack on Monday. Events in Assam are now moving with the inexorability of a Greek tragedy. The next two rounds of the elections will be held on Thursday and Sunday for there can be no turning back now, no matter how many more lives are lost in the process. All that the blood-drenched exercise will have accomplished is to provide a way out of the constitutional crisis since President's rule could not have been extended further in that State under the existing provisions. In view of the all-pervasive fear complex that vitiated the elections throughout, the outcome cannot possibly reflect the will of the people.

The blame for the Assam tragedy rests squarely on the student agitators whose bid to sabotage the democratic process cannot be condemned too strongly. The Opposition parties too must share the responsibility for they could have enabled the Government to put off the elections by co-operating with it in amending the Constitution so that President's rule in the State could be extended beyond one year. The offer to do so came too late, long after the electoral process had been initiated and when only a couple of days remained for the polling to commence. The Opposition parties are now attributing motives to the Government. They claim that the Government did not postpone the elections because the ruling party had a vested interest in securing the votes of 'foreign nationals' in Assam. But as Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has pointed out repeatedly, it was the Opposition which has made the elections inevitable by dilly-dallying over the Government's proposal to amend the

Constitution. A glaring instance of the Opposition's inconsistency was the Lok Dal-C's plea for the imposition of a "self-extinguishing emergency" for a week to postpone the Assam poll and avoid bloodshed in that State. These were the people who had denounced the earlier Emergency from the house-tops and cashed in handsomely on it during the 1977 Lok Sabha elections. It is difficult at this stage to provide an answer to the nagging question: "What next in Assam?" It is now clear that the agitators there will not agree to a reasonable settlement on the foreign nationals' issue and eventually a unilateral solution may have to be imposed. If for this purpose it becomes necessary to enforce a state of Emergency there, the Opposition cannot now logically question the step.

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Brezhnev Reigns Supreme

The Soviet President's position has never been stronger.

by MARK FRANKLAND

THE Soviet Communist Party congress just ended here saw the triumph of a group of mostly old men, collectively the oldest ever to have ruled the Soviet Union, behaving as though the succession problem did not exist.

It also, contradictorily, saw the Soviet establishment recommit itself to a daring policy of developing the wild eastern and northern regions of the country, that the youngest pioneers might find daunting.

Although the average age of the Politburo is pushing 70, and its oldest member (the Latvian Bolshevik Arvid Pelshe) is 81, the congress made not a single change to it.

As for Brezhnev, his position has never looked stronger. In the Politburo elected after the previous party congress in 1976, he had to contend with two figures of seniority and substance: Kosygin, the then Prime Minister, and Podgorny, who was President.

But Kosygin is dead and Podgorny, replaced as President by Brezhnev in 1977, slipped off the political map finally last week when he lost his seat in the Central Committee.

Trusted Men

What is more, Brezhnev has managed to bring into the Central Committee, or to promote within its hierarchy, several trusted associates and even relations, even though family connections are unusual in Soviet politics.

His son, Yuri, First Vice-Minister of Foreign Trade, and his son-in-law, a Deputy Minister of the Interior, were elected candidate members of the committee.

His brother-in-law, the First Deputy Chairman of the KGB, was promoted to full membership.

Among the interesting Brezhnevites to be promoted was Dr. Georgi Arbatov, who also became a full member.

Arbatov is one of the leadership's advisers on America and détente, and his continued rise is just one more sign—though it is scarcely needed—of Brezhnev's determination to continue with a

foreign policy laid down a decade ago.

There is the same sticking to the past in domestic policy. One Western embassy, having read the economic policy speeches at the congress, felt tempted to repeat to their Government the telegram they had sent after the 1976 congress.

The slogans are the same: efficiency, economy, quality. And yet what amounts to a revolution in an economy that till recently had merely to increase gross production, almost regardless of cost and quality, is meant to be achieved by only marginally changed techniques of strict central planning.

A great deal will depend, both for the Soviet Union and the rest of the world, on whether the Soviet leadership can achieve the ambitious economic targets it has set itself while sticking to these trusted, politically safe methods of management.



Brezhnev announced ambitious targets for the next five years at the congress. Coal production is to rise by a maximum of 12 per cent to 800 million tons; oil, more modestly by a 7 per cent maximum to 645 million tons (but a staggering 380 million tons is to come from Tyumen alone, twice the region's present production); natural gas is to jump by a huge 47 per cent.

Possibly the most important story in the Soviet Union over the next few years will be whether an elderly and conservative leadership can achieve these results.

If it is seen to be failing, it runs the risk of being challenged. But if it succeeds, Brezhnev, assuming that part will dese

world; death to the Jew. frustrated crank had be-

and his friends were forgotten, as Hugenberg, Schleicher and Papen are forgotten.

By the advent of the 1930s, as a result of the world-wide slump, the Weimar Republic was on the verge of economic and political chaos. Seven million people, a third of the total work force, were unemployed. A large proportion of these became social driftwood and joined the National Socialists. Up to September 14, 1930 they oc-

of the Hitler-Stalin pact seven years later.

The Communist verbiage, attempting to justify these fratricidal policies with Marxian dialectics, fell on deaf ears. "A worker has no Fatherland" or "Social Democracy is Fascism in disguise" were slogans incomprehensible to the mass mind which the beerhouse orator manipulated with such virtuosity. When, on 20 July 1932, Chan-

nerated him as a demi-god. Others saw in the little man with the Chaplin moustache only the grotesque soap-box orator. Sir Anthony Rumbold, an old friend and retired diplomat, recently wrote to me:

"I met Hitler briefly in March 1933 about a month after he had become chancellor. My father was the British ambassador in Berlin and he

(Continued on page 10)

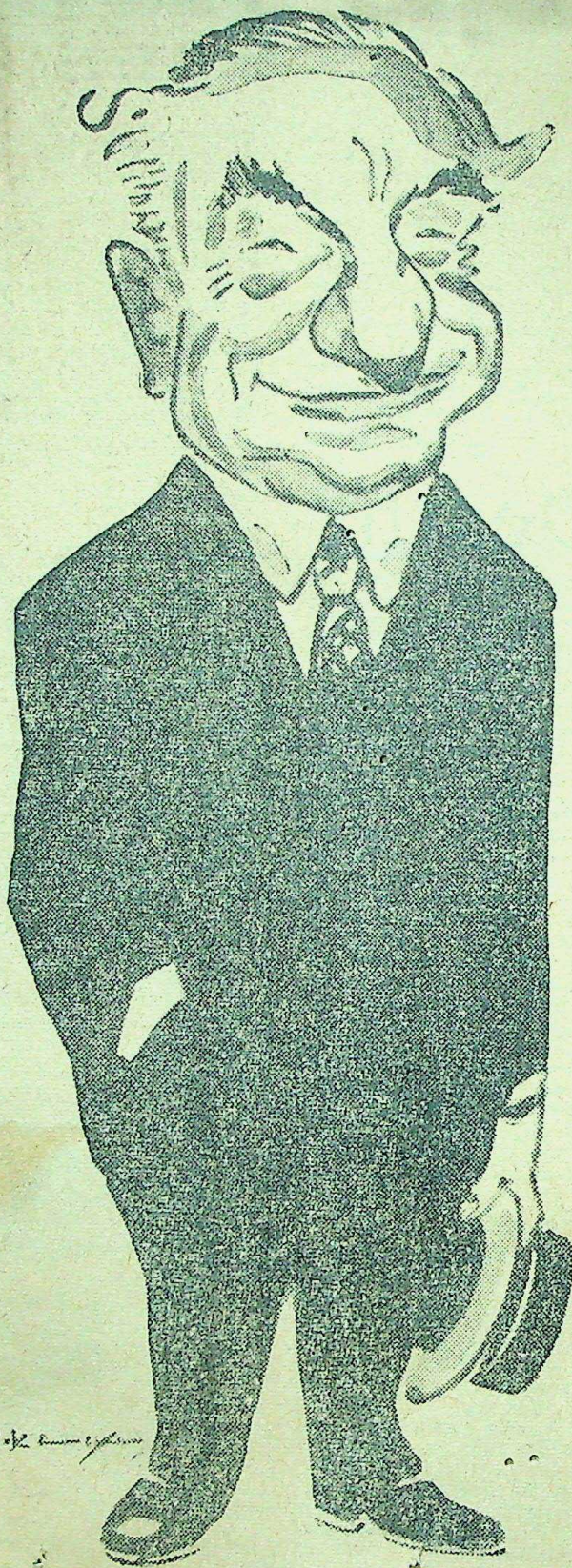
A Civilian All The Way

B. K. Nehru is probably one of the last Civilians to be still holding office. He is today a spry 70 and not content like others of his ilk to find ego satisfaction in nostalgia.

SINCE independence Kashmiri pandits have played a crucial — and sometimes controversial — role in the affairs of India. The fact that some of them have had close connections with the Nehru family cannot be held against them, for they have been distinguished men and women in their own right. Brij Kumar Nehru, for example, and Indira Gandhi are second cousins: they both have childhood memories of Anand Bhavan and the men who visited it, men whose names would constitute a veritable roll-call of honour in the recent history of India.

It would be tempting to imagine how B. K. Nehru would have shaped had he taken part in the national struggle that brought some of his kin to the height of glory. (His mother Rameshwari Nehru, if not his father Braj Lal Nehru, participated in the freedom movement.) He had all the advantages of birth: he was brought up in affluence and was educated abroad. He studied at Balliol College, Oxford, and at the London School of Economics where he came into contact with Harold Laski whose name was magic at least to two generations of politically aware Indians. He also studied law and was called to the Bar from the Inner Temple. As a boy he had wanted to become an engineer, but it was customary for bright lads from upper-class families in his time to appear for the ICS examination. Braj Kumar succeeded only in his third attempt to qualify for what was then the most coveted service in the world: it showed his determination rather than any lack of talent in him.

B. K. Nehru is probably one of the last Civilians to be still holding office. He is today a spry 70 and not content, like others of his ilk, to find ego satisfaction in nostalgia. He has 45 years' experience in administration from the time he was drafted to the Punjab cadre as assistant commissioner. The ICS has been despised by our



soldiers of freedom — not without reason. Many thought themselves to be bred and flourished in Indian soil. But a few, like Nehru, had the fire of smouldering in them and too had to conform to the type led by the nose of the British master but a memsaheb.

B. K. Nehru is as much the cocktail circuits in America as he is to the bungalows in his native country. He is a man of social graces more than the collar and necktie one wears of the friendliness and closeness kept in chatting to the foreign dignitary. Many administrators today have aces of any kind which are excusable had they a modicum of ability. The distinction of B. K. Nehru is that in him the affability go hand in hand with a high degree of managerial competence.

He is in a sense a Chameleon all times. He can adapt himself to all tempers and all conditions. Over the years he has distinguished himself in two fields: economics and diplomacy. He has learned the hard way in the process of coming to grips with the problems of India during his long career. (It was political science that he studied at the London School of Economics.) He has had a long spell in the United States — about 14 years — as Executive Director of the World Bank, Commissioner General for Economic Affairs and as an ambassador.

He is as much to the cocktail circuits in Europe and America as he is to the bungalows in his native country.

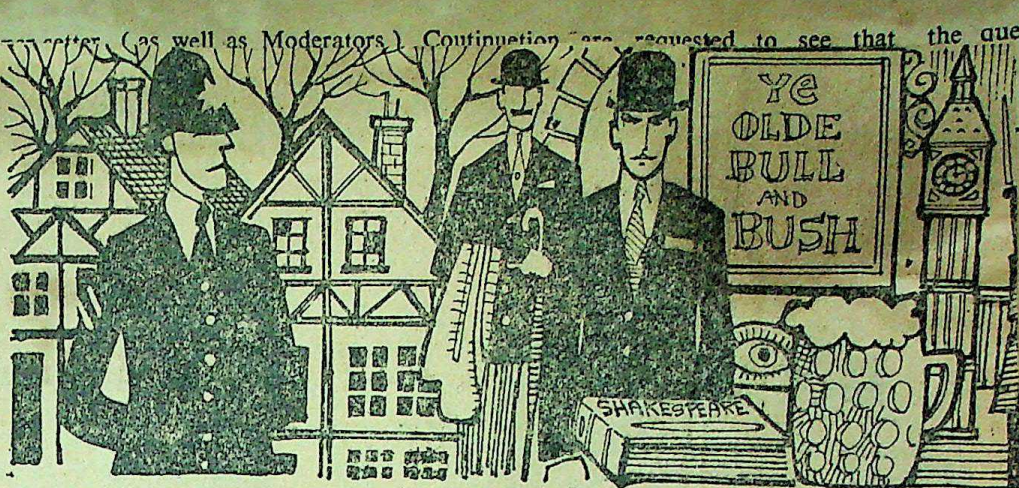
This long association with the United States made him suspect in the eyes of some Indians who regarded him as a counterpart of Chester Bowles, that is one who turns out to be a spokesman of the country to which he is accredited rather than of the country he represents. In May 1961, when China was tormenting us on our borders, B. K. Nehru made a reference to the sorry state of our defence, thereby incurring the wrath of Panditji and some other MPs. But, in November of the same year, he had to hand to President Kennedy a message from Prime Minister Nehru about the grim military position on the NEFA and Ladakh fronts.

It was during his long Washington

shooter. He has a shes facing (read) it. That explains to become General and Kashmir around in his memoirs to glorify himself.

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There Are Two

.... orfe of civilised men and women and another of unspeakable savages....

"After being anti-Indian am I turning anti-British as well?" asks NIRAD C. CHAUDHURI, and answers the question.

TODAY I am going to offer an explanation which will also be a confession of faith. In India I have been regarded as a slavishly pro-British man. For the admiration of English life and civilisation to which my *Passage to England* gave expression I was described as a dog wagging its tail in a widely circulated Indian journal. So, my screeds on present-day England must have given rise to surprise among fellow-Indians. My British readers and friends may also have shared it.

To all of them I would say: I am recanting nothing. I am denouncing a wholly new and different England which I see as the enemy and destroyer of the England I have admired and loved. I might say in the words of Lovelace, which I read before I was sixteen:

'True; a new Mistress now I chase,

The first Foe in the Field;
And with a stronger Faith
imbrace

A Sword, a Horse, a Shield.

'Yet this Inconstancy is such,

As you too shall adore;

I could not love thee (Deare)

so much,

grievance against his house set fire to his house, and caused £158,000 worth of damage.

6. A fourteen year old boy threw a stone at a girl of six, and when she said that she would tell her mother, killed her. Then he buried her, and went home to watch TV. When his sister told their mother that he had killed the child the mother did not pay any attention. Afterwards the father of the murdered girl left his wife be-

Love'd I not honour more.'

I have never been a believer in the principle, if it is really not a negation of principle — My family, right or wrong. Adherence to this idea has harmed India through the ages. Even the venerated Mahabharata, which has held up the awful example of Dhritarashtra's infatuation, has not cured us Hindus of the folly of standing by our Duryodhanas.

It was my parents who taught me to give up this false idea of loyalty. If we the brothers fought with a play-fellow and he complained to my mother, she always punished us. To our plea that provocations came from them, she replied: "Why did you give them any occasion for complaints?"

"They reserve their compassion for a Saudi princess who was punished for adultery with death."

My father followed the same course. Once, when there was a question of dividing the joint property of my brother-in-law (sister's husband) and his brothers, the eldest of the latter asked my father to be one of the arbitrators. He

girl and her 'boy friend' going towards a solitary place and followed them with a shot gun. Finding them engaged in sexual intercourse, he shot the boy, and went for the girl. She tried to run away, but was overtaken, stunned by a blow, and then raped. After killing her the man went back to the boy, and finding him writhing in agony took pity on him, as he said, and killed him in order to

called me and said: "Nirad, do you see N's (the eldest brother's) cunning? He asks me to be an arbitrator because he knows that I shall never press the claims of my son-in-law. I have refused."

So, I have always wanted my family to be right if it wanted my loyalty. To have written about England as I have done and will do can never be any kind of recantation, for what I am denouncing is a barbarism which is threatening the very life and civilisation I have admired. No believer in civilisation is allowed to forget that there are two Englands today, one of civilised men and women and another of unspeakable savages.

I was forewarned of the emergence of these wreckers as far back as 1921 when I read the sensational Romanes lecture of Dean Inge about the idea of progress. He said in it: "Ancient civilisations were destroyed by imported barbarians, we manufacture our own." But the barbarians who destroyed the Graeco-Roman world were clean, in England I am having to see how unclean barbarism can be. To illustrate that I give only ten examples out of the scores I could give even from the last three months. Three things should be noted about them: they are all authentic cases, and not speculative scandal-mongering; they are culled from reports in the *Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*; last of all, they do not come from the underworld of crime, but from those sections of British society which, so far, have been law-abiding, disciplined, and moral.

1. Going about in London has become insecure. Lord Home, the

Yet I would find fault with them for their passivity, and for forgetting that civilisation can never be triumphant, it has always to be militant. Why should it be left to me, an outsider, to feel the anger which they should show? It seems to me that civilisation in Britain, in spite of being massive, is now only a massive survival. Perhaps it will not be long before it is wholly in ruins.

world; death to the Jew.
The frustrated crank had be-

of France, while Sieves and his friends were forgotten, as Hugenberg, Schleicher and Papen are forgotten.

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Continued on Page 12

Interferon was available in India, my son Sunil would have been alive today," Lata told me wringing her hands. Eight-year-old Sunil had died three years ago of blood cancer — leukaemia. Let us see if interferon is really the miracle drug it is made out to be.

Man was jubilant with the discovery of penicillin by Sir Alexander Fleming. He thought he had won a resounding victory over his arch enemy — the bacteria, especially those that caused disease and death.

MIRACLE DRUG?: Thousands of pints of human blood are required to treat just one patient.

It was, however, a shortlived triumph, for although many bacterial infections were conquered, a few families like gonococcus, staphylococcus and streptococcus produced resistant strains against whom man's Exocet missile (penicillin) was powerless. Ironically, it is man's indiscriminate use of penicillin in insufficient doses for insufficient periods of time that

Life lives on death. Till the advent of penicillin, the bacteria kept the viruses under their thumb. But on the ashes of the defeated bacteria, the viruses went on their rampage and planted viral diseases like viral pneumonia, influenza, infectious hepatitis (jaundice), gastroenteritis and genital herpes. Man was caught off guard by these sudden epidemics and had to arm himself. Shocked but undaunted

In Search Of Goo

If we want good research we cannot be too rigid about directing it into prespecified areas.

by KAUSHIK BASU

A SOCIAL science can, for some time, thrive on the principle of ambiguity, that is, an ability to make readers of diverse views feel that the text endorses their opinions. Some of the classic works in the social sciences have exploited this principle with mastery. However, as a science matures it sheds its ambiguities. This process has begun in certain social disciplines and certainly in

economics. Terms, like utility and efficiency, which had once lent the dismal science its almost mystical aura are today well-defined and much less controversial. With this, the accomplishments of the subject are beginning to show up, and the reaction among economists is varied. Some wince, appalled at the meagre achievements, while others feel contented looking back over the shoulders. But what is common among them all is a mood of introspection.

The main backlash is against the avant-garde economist's penchant for mathematics and hair-splitting arguments. To a large extent, the criticisms are justified: Increasingly, mathematics is being used for reasons of fashion and even as a facade for sloppy thinking. But one has to be careful not to over emphasise. In a paper on social science methodology, which is bound to be influential in India, Amit Bhaduri argues that social scientists should ensure that their

theories and results are such as can be explained to the laity. Of course, he grants that the process of deriving these results may be very complex. But even with this proviso, Bhaduri's position seems untenable. Some of the most significant results in economics are ones which cannot be explained with accuracy to everybody. In such cases, to explain is to mislead people into believing that they have understood and this can be dangerous. The consequences of Margaret Thatcher 'understanding' Adam Smith are well known.

Another example is the misleading simplicity of 'supply-side' economics. This is the dominant philosophy of Reagan's government and it claims that by curtailing government activity and taxes, incentives can be so increased that not only will people's income rise but so will the total tax collection. In their zeal to make their theory intelligible to the average U.S. Republican Congressman, the supply-

side's Israel and been based on beliefs. But for monetarist theory like describing nan's discovery or fission in uranium because it in the U.S. shima. In fact as himself argued, patibility between socialism. This is for all positive ideological cate-

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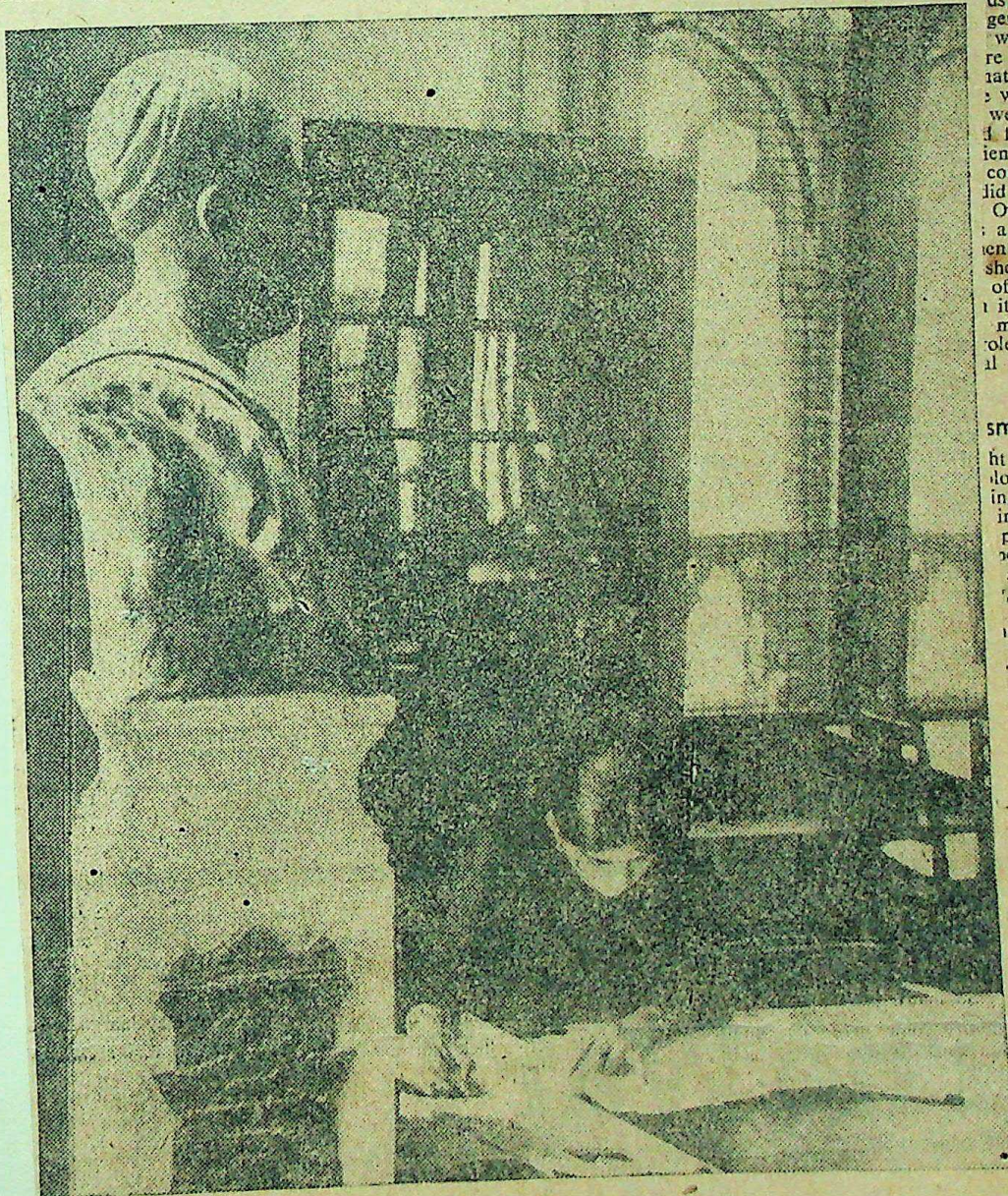
me of the pro- sciences, par-

sion.

Another factor which strangles good research is the absence of adequate theoretical advances. The Indian Council for Social Science Research and other academic administrations, in their effort to encourage 'relevant' research, have focussed all their efforts on empirical projects and case studies. This belittling of abstract theory-

with disdain the moment anybody mentions monetarism. This they generally do, not because they have scientific objections to the monetarist thesis, but because they fear that not to chuckle is to be a 'right-winger'. This baseless association stems from the fact that the leading monetarists — Professor Friedman and the other Chicago boys — have been associated with

particularly as practised in India. There are other more general criticisms and more fundamental ones. But even if all these were taken care of, the future of the social sciences would be unknown. Many of these disciplines are at the crossroads. One can only wonder whether they will survive and whether they will be able to do so after money.



The average quality of our research students leaves much to be desired.

Whispers Of Thi

The need for a balanced mystical orientation is the unborn future's top priority. How best can we co-operate with the crisis and the cosmos? Must we leave the Emergence to Him and chance? Or, are there methods and a tradition to help the human being?

by Sisirkumar Ghose



Mummified Mandragora (Durville collection).

NOWADAYS mysticism counts more adherents in the West than in its original home. We are still the greatest supplier of gurus, but there is little by way of intelligent concern or discussion.

The present anthology drawn from two issues of *The American Theosophist*, is a proof of numerous "silent encounters" adding up to a new way of seeing and being, till one is inclined to accept the epigraph: "Who can admit that there is anything else in the world, after this has come into the world."

There is, as Joy Mills underlines, a personal truth that man needs above all and which he has to acquire for himself. This is what distinguishes man from other creatures and this knowledge from every other, a fundamental category, "on the far side of consciousness", far and yet near. The evidence is indubitable. To believe Tillich, billions have experienced the ultimate. As Manly Hall explains, in mysticism we are but exploring a universe worthy of ourselves. Thanks to a change in the climate, we seem to be living in a time when there has been a "great swing, from rationalism to mysticism". Well, if not a great swing, a perceptible turn, towards the "wise science" of Aurora, to use Jacob Boehme's solar symbol.

Science and mysticism get three, inter-related essays. Science is outward, logical, verifiable. Mysticism is inward, a-logical, a non-transferable illumination hard to verify. How shall the two speak to each other? As Emily Sellen ("Scientist as Mystic") suggests, the experience of unity in both might be a link. She, draws heavily upon the physicist Schrodinger, who had equated Mind with Nature and gone on to add: "Subject and object are one", a thought dear to the mystic soul. F.L. Kunz, in his "Modern Exact Science as Mysticism" makes a strong plea for non-material field forces as the missing unifying concept. Gross physicalism, we are told, is no longer tenable. Even from a right reading of the atom — compressed light and primal power, with its musical macrocosm of electronic standing waves — one might move from physics to metaphysics. Louisa Line's "Mysticism in the Space Age" underlines how modern mathematicians and physicists, forced beyond the two-dimensional space, finite time and the sensory-experience view of reality, sound like metaphysicians, such as "every pathway of understanding within nature ultimately leads beyond nature". For all we know, there may be other centres of energy and consciousness, uncovered sheaths. The laws of the Unseen govern the seen. So occultists believe and perhaps more than believe.

When the answer to the question "In all men is the same hunger. If every soul is an Apollo, all have the passion to grow into the similitude of the Supreme", the uncreated light in which shadows vanish and illusion is no more. By that hunger, mysticism feeds and grows. "Man: Homo Mysticus" by Laurence Penner takes account of the "occult explosion" sweeping over the world, especially in the West, which is enough to that, without a national mysticism.

born

encounter with the... of, unconventional... anti-dogmatic... wever, on the... at-of-body... ing and the... alchemy and the... protagonists speak of... an era of mystical... and "The Recovery of Religion."

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Byl

time w... building... ed its... temples... express... Temple... This... Aryan... the pra... sanctum... gudham... lion), s... massive... is faced... ported... pillar... into se... seval, (... tek), (The lov... of gods... niches;... ly carv... The... shrine... hall (a... hall c... isabhan... dapa),... da), no... The... form p... the ten... structure... from it... or a p... The... mhad...

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THE SILENT... Reflections... Edited by... (The Theosophical... House, 5 275)

THE SUN SHRINE

SITUATED about 110 kilometres from Ahmedabad on the Ahmedabad-Mount Abu highway, the Sun Temple at Modhera dates back to the reign of the Solanki ruler, Bhimdeo I. Built in 1026-27 A.D., the shrine reminds one of the famous Sun Temples at Konarak in Orissa and Martand in Kashmir.

Modhera is like any other Indian village. But when one looks at the magnificent monument to the Sun God and recalls Solanki's determination to triumph over Mahmud of Ghazni, the site acquires an irresistible charm.

Rajputs trace their lineage from the Sun God; they claim to be a solar race, "Suryavansi." No wonder, therefore, that the Solanki regarded their parent God, the Sun, with supreme devotion. Their art and architecture glorified the Sun as they set out to face foreign onslaughts.

After Mahmud's return to Ghazni, the Solanki recovered quickly and repaired temples that the Afghan had razed to the ground.

It was also the beginning of a period of comparative peace and prosperity in Western India, and the beginning of the golden period of the Solanki dynasty. This state of affluence found expression in the evolution of a form of religious architecture which was a typical Indo-Aryan style, also known as the Gujarat style, and developed during the reign of the Solanki dynasty between the 10th and the 13th centuries.

The 11th century was also the

By B. N. Tripathi

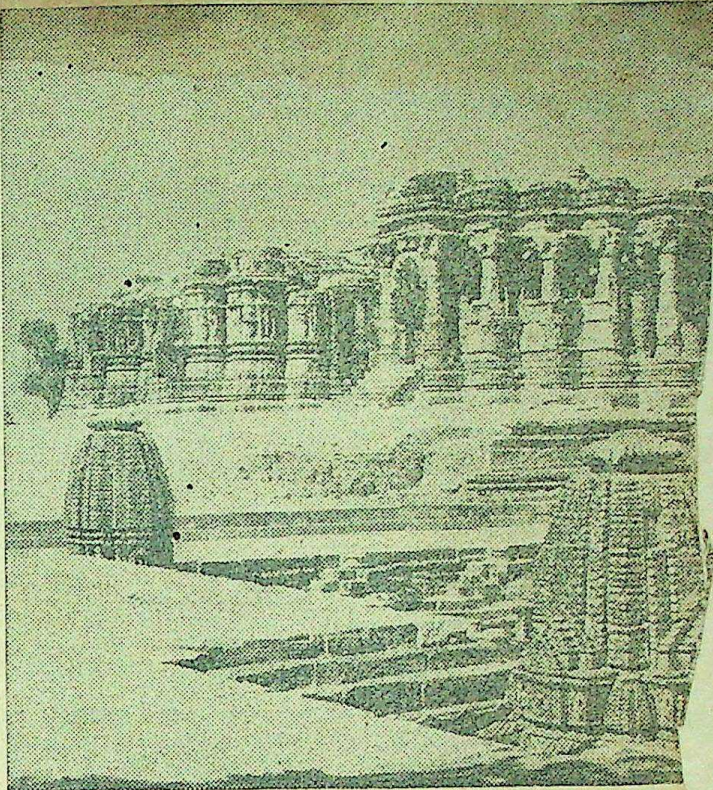
time when the art of temple building in Western India reached its height. In none of the temples was this more perfectly expressed than in the Sun Temple at Modhera.

This shrine is a typical Indo-Aryan structure of Nagar order, the *prasad* dominating over the sanctum, joined in front to the *gudhamandapa* (covered pavilion), supported by a group of massive pillars. The main shrine is faced by another hall supported by 32 pillars. The typical pillar is a stout column divided into several sections (*kumbha*, *seval*, *yashti*, *bharani*, *sir* and *tek*), each part richly carved. The lower part shows a series of gods standing separately in niches; the figures are delicately carved in high relief.

The temple consists of the shrine proper (*garbhagharaha*), a hall (*adhamandapa*), an outer hall or the assembly hall (*sabhamandapa* or *rangamandapa*), and a sacred pool (*kunda*), now called Ramakunda.

The *sabhamandapa* does not form part of the main body of the temple, but is a distinct structure placed a little away from it. Both, however, are built on a paved platform.

The shrine and the *gudhamandapa* form a rectangle. The *garbhagharaha* is 11 feet square. The walls are of stone which covered



Sun temple at Modhera

of the shrine where the floor has caved in. The image of the Sun God—now missing—was enshrined in the upper cell while the lower was probably meant for storage purposes. The shrine walls inside are plain but the doorway is sculptured with figures of Surya seated and surrounded by dancers and amorous couples.

The simplicity of the inside walls is balanced by the numerous carvings on their exterior. Particular attention is paid to

the figures of Surya which have been sculptured in the niches round the *pradaksinamarga*, as well as outside the three niches on each side of the three windows. Generally, Surya is shown standing on a chariot being driven by seven horses. These images are influenced by the Iranian style characterized mainly by high boots reaching the knees.

The *gudhamandapa* has three projections: the entrance facing east, the others being the side windows. These were enclosed

A New Sym

(Continued from page 1)

night of June 15, 1219, the Esthonians attacked the camp, forced their way into it, and killed Theoderic in his tent. Most of the king's men, with the king himself, were on board their ships, and were summoned to the rescue. The fighting surged back and forth, the Esthonians seemed to have the advantage.

There is a legend that an old Danish archbishop (Anders Sunesen) knelt down during the battle, stretched his arms towards Heaven, and prayed to God for help. When his arms raised the Lord appeared; but when he lowered them in prayer, the Esthonians gained the upper hand.

Things were looking black for the Danes, when a peal of thunder sounded and a flag with a white cross appeared on its fabric floated down from the sky, as a voice was heard to say: "When you raise your banner against you, you will be victorious."

this miracle the Danes were inspired with new courage. They defeated the Esthonians, and subjugated the country before sailing home.

In countries with a legendary literature these old legends have proved to be more reliable than was formerly supposed.

The city of Reval in Esthonia has in its coat of arms the three blue lions on a golden ground of the royal Danish arms, and the city has used a Dannebrog for its emblem: a white cross on a red ground. From the fifteenth century the merchants' guild carried this flag in procession on festive occasions in Reval.

Also, it is certain that only compelling reasons can have led the king to give up his own banner with his own arms (the three lions) in order to have it

A Thought for Today

A hungry man is not a free man.

—ADLAI STEVENSON

A Nuclear Pakistan

The main obstacle in the way of the U.S. government getting congressional sanction for its 3.2 billion-dollar arms and economic aid package for Pakistan, which includes the sale of F-16s, is Pakistan's refusal to say unequivocally that it will not develop nuclear weapons. The Reagan administration, determined to make Pakistan a vital part of its anti-Soviet "strategic consensus", is evading the issue by arguing that giving Pakistan such advanced weapons as the F-16 will make it feel secure enough not to want to go in for nuclear weapons. The Americans should tell that to the marines. Some weeks ago, the director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mr Sigmund Eklund, confessed that he could no longer guarantee the effectiveness of the agency's nuclear safeguards at Pakistan's Canadian-supplied reactor. He is not alone in being worried about what Pakistan is up to there. Some weeks ago, Senator Alan Cranston revealed—and the U.S. administration later confirmed—that a growing number of "anomalies", "irregularities" and mysterious breakdowns had been occurring in the reactor's monitoring devices. Most disturbing of all—and U.S. government officials have again confirmed it—Pakistan is moving fast towards completing a secret reprocessing plant and is also preparing a nuclear test site. Until now, the problem for the Pakistanis has been getting spent fuel to reprocess for plutonium. Now, they have cracked this one as well. While the details are still secret, Pakistan is believed to be adding nuclear fuel rods made in its fabrication plant, which is not covered by IAEA safeguards, to the reactor, that is so covered. Once the rods are irradiated, they are removed from the safeguards system. Both American intelligence agencies and the IAEA are apprehensive about these "suspicious" goings-on. And well they might be, since the irradiated rods form a plutonium reserve that can be reprocessed once the reprocessing plant is operational.

There remains the matter of a nuclear test explosion. The U.S. government contends that it has left Pakistan in no doubt that the U.S. sees no difference between a weapons test and a peaceful explosion. At the same time, contradictorily, the Reagan team wants to exempt Pakistan from the "Symington amendment", which bans U.S. aid to countries devising nuclear weaponry. So Pakistan could have a test explosion, which the U.S. would regard as a weapons test, but for which it would nevertheless not penalise Pakistan. However, Pakistan does not need to have an explosion, "peaceful" or otherwise, to make the bomb. Israel and South Africa, the former on its own admission, are known to have developed nuclear weapons, but they have not been known to have had test explosions. For that matter, when the Americans dropped the A-bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, that horrific act was the test explosion. So even if Pakistan gave assurances about not having a test explosion, that would not prevent it from developing nuclear weapons. Pakistan, all the evidence shows, has set its heart on becoming a nuclear power. It is also keen to get all the F-16s it can and as soon as it can. With the help of the Reagan administration, it may accomplish both.

Islamic Militancy Carries Malaysia

By DILIP MUKERJEE

LUMPUR: Islamic poses a twofold challenge to the multiracial coalition Front, which has in another run Malaysia independence 20 years ago, the one hand the domestic effect on a of which over half of the population is non-Muslim the Philippines and whose small Muslim on the warpath, at the help of their kinsmen.

Incident

of the challenge are sing concern. On the much nervousness stems incident last month in flowing white robes police station at Batu south of Kuala Lumpur of the, eight of them by the police and 23 at the police station rd-wielding attackers.

signs of strain have Malaysia's otherwise close with Thailand. Bangkok led since early this year tary operations the two conducting on the Thai border against the rem Communist Party of though Kuala Lumpur longer the suspension ter the danger of insur dating themselves once

have opted out because refusal to let the joint simultaneously with tists who operate like insurgents in the same is connecting peninsular Thailand.

some undercurrent of Malaysia's relations with es on account of the Muslim insurgency in islands of Mindanao erated by a short stretch Sabah, the East Malay the Philippines' military. e government in Manila, public accusations that used as a training and the Moro National nt masterminding the

ancy has not become tem in relations between Singapore, but there is the disquiet the latter's

leaders feel about the danger of a spillover of trouble. Muslim Malays make up 15 per cent of Singapore's population, and their educational and other handicaps make them the underdogs in a predominantly Chinese society.

Malaysia's National Front government fully recognises the danger Muslim militancy poses to its survival. The racial give and take on which the front is based would be put in grave jeopardy if the militants succeed in their bid to impose Islamic orthodoxy on an easy-going, and almost permissive, Malaysian society. The government has still very much the upper hand in dealing with not only the law and order aspect but also the political challenge mounted by the pan-Malay Islamic Party which hopes to benefit from the Islamic upsurge, particularly

noticeable among the educated youth. But the government labours under handicap. The United Malays National Organisation, the mainstay of the National Front, cannot observe object to *Dakwah* the Malay sion of the Arabic word, *Daw* meaning an invitation to the faith. The *Dakwah* movement, which rise in some cases to extrem of the kind underlying the attack at Batu Pahat, continues, therefore to flourish leaving the UMNO no choice but to climb on the bandwagon in the hope of steering it to a safer course in the interests of promoting domestic stability and avoiding external complications.

The UMNO attempt is to portray the more aggressive *Dakwah* groups as deviationists distorting Islam's fundamental values and using the government police powers to stop their activities. The internal security act which permits detention without trial is, being used increasingly to pet brands out of circulation.

Though such agencies as the National Council for Islamic Affairs or the Islamic Scholars' Association of Malaysia provide forums for evolving a coordinated, nationwide approach, the federal government has no direct say in religious affairs which fall within the purview of the nine hereditary sultans who are the heads of their states. In the four states which have no sultans, the same powers vest in the king of Malaysia, elected for a five-year term from among the sultans.

Constitutional Changes

In the wake of the grim Batu Pahat incident, the former prime minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman, has called for constitutional changes to give federal government power "to take action against deviationists and fanatic movements." Predictably, this call is not endorsed by the Islamic Party or the powerful Islamic youth movement known as *Abim*, the acronym of its Malay name. For the present, *Abim* is not a major factor in Malaysian politics. In theory, it cannot participate in politics because it is registered as a missionary society but its activities have, in practice, a strong political connotation.

While Mr Anwar himself stays clear of the Islamic Party, his associates have moved over from *Abim* to join the party's supreme council. Their aim, as one scholar says, is to build a viable Islamic alternative to an UMNO-dominated political system. Interestingly, *Abim*'s annual convention in July 1979 was keyed to a multi-theme of Islamic solution for a multi-racial society.

Like *Abim*, the Islamic Party also has the problem of a split personality. At the official and public level, it subscribed to the national goal of building a harmonious society in which minorities are free to practice their own religious beliefs and culture. But in practice the Islamic Party has an organic link with militants, as confirmed by the discovery of a within it which aimed to set up a holy army to create a Muslim state. It uses Islam as a political weapon to recover the ground it lost in the last general election in 1978 when it won only five parliamentary seats compared with 13 in 1974 and 12 in 1969. (Copyright: The Times of India)

Culture over the cou

Speaking
Volumes



Lists of the 'best' books which the Americans are fond of compiling are probably an offshoot of their unenviable ability to regard culture as a marketable commodity.

EVER are Americans more disingenuous than when they claim to be a classless society, seldom more offputting than when they disapprove of older societies for being caste ridden and non-egalitarian. Yet the work of Paul Fussell's *Caste in Style and Status In The United States* (Heinemann, £8.95) is pre-occupied with the United States as the most class dominated of the most class dominated countries in the world. This is a study all the more fascinating for being concerned with an aspect of the American people which has long been suspected but seldom fully acknowledged. Here we have a picture of the entire range of American discrimination as based on grounds of accent, region of origin, ethnic background, clothing, education, and economic status.

Combination of these various factors adds up to a class system in which the Americans instinctively to understand reference to an unspoken hierarchy can be seen to operate never acknowledged. The fact that all Americans are other by the same assemblage is doubtless no more than a ritual flaunting of the democratic credentials. The reality is that, deprived of Americans have resur-

rected it with a formidable subtlety which is at the same time tinsel-like for lacking the tradition to support it.

American caste is the more inefficient and vulnerable in being based on its own spurious denial; and if the unacknowledged pursuit of class is an amiable failing the cumulative hypocrisy it generates in this and other fields is arguably less innocent. A provocative and stimulating book which asks us from a novel angle, to take a second very necessary look at the American people.

Theatre reviews like book reviews seldom survive the ephemeral conditions in which they are produced. One thinks, as exceptions, of Agate, Archer, Shaw of course and Beerbohm, especially the last whose collection

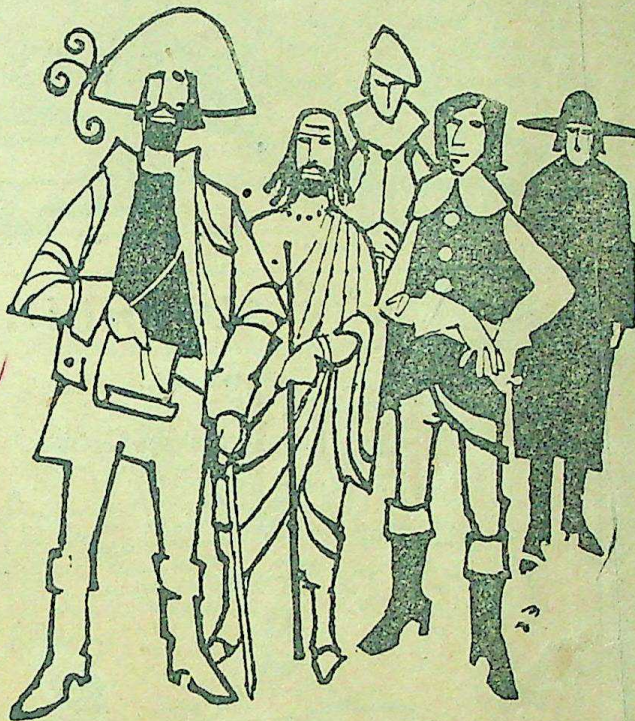
of theatre reviews is tailor-made as the bedside book for all seasons, dipable into the immensely readable as only Max can be. But running all of them close is Kenneth Tynan whose *A View of the English Theatre* is now available as a Methuen paperback (£4.95), a collection of one hundred and twelve pieces covering a period of twenty-one years and postwar record of the British theatre which is unapologetically and appealingly egotistic.

For the point about all these critics is that they are full of themselves and one is drawn to their notices not because of the plays or the actors or actresses in them but because they are Tynan or Agate, Shaw or Beerbohm. The plays are often forgotten. So are the actors. But

the reviews by Beerbohm for example, continue to effervesce, the observations, insights, analyses and deductions and interpretations being preserved in their own independent right to survive, irrespective of the plays and occasions which were their original support. Tynan's book of course offers other ample rewards to the theatre addict but it is as exercises in complicated subjective responsiveness as between critic and play that these long dated reviews continue to grip the general reader.

Lists of the "best" books which the Americans are fond of compiling are probably an offshoot of their unenviable ability to regard culture as a marketable commodity. The idea is to make it as easy on the consumer as possible, to provide him with a figurative button on pressing which he will effortlessly be in possession of a library of books consistent with the status he aspires to achieve. Other lists, less rebarbative are the fun-making ones which the *Sunday Times* or the *Observer* arranges for the fierce controversies they are likely to provoke. Yet others consist of selections of books by the eminent to satisfy the curiosity of the less eminent. But the most serviceable of them all, intended for those who aspire to build up a library of their own, is contained in a book called *An English Library* by Seymour Smith, compiled originally for the National Book League and published by the Cambridge University Press in 1943. Since then it has been reprinted, revised and enlarged up to 1963 after which there has apparently been no new edition. Which is indeed a pity for here is a "list" of the English classics with notes on editions that is a treasure house of information for the modest yet serious dabbler in this field.

There is the rather severe view that those who want a library of their own should learn to acquire one by the exercise of their own judgment. But the



answering-back reviewer - an answering-back author: "As Mrs Young has now thoughtfully provided another review of her book I need only say that I did not mean to imply that she was either unilateralist or pro-Soviet - although I would regard neither of those descriptions as pejorative. My point, which I now take the opportunity to repeat, was that I did not think much of the book."

NIN

He went to Hanover—and

A salutary rule for a public man to follow is not to make passes at women in public places. He cannot outrage the modesty of a lady as he cannot do violence to the dignity of his office.

Any individual who wants to impress his neighbours with his official standing makes himself laughable; he is no better than a cock crowing over its lordship of the dunghill on which it is perched. Such a man expects the world to fawn upon him. If he walks on the road he likes to think that he is pacing out the extent of his empire and if he is on a flight he imagines his writ runs across the skies.

A salutary rule for a public man to follow is not to make

passes at women in public places. He cannot outrage the modesty of a lady as he cannot do violence to the dignity of his office. In medieval times a feudal lord felt free to lay hands on any girl. It is unthinkable that in these days of enlightenment an official or political leader will do the same unless he is befuddled or has grand delusions about himself. There is nothing more ludicrous than such a man should think that any woman could be hauled into his arms by the

THE pages of history are made lurid with accounts of the insatiable concupiscence of conquerors and kings and statesmen and even religious leaders. In modern times princely India has yielded a rich crop of moral lepers. One name that immediately comes to mind is that of Maharaja Sir Hari Singh of Kashmir who figured in the gossip columns of the western press for his amorous escapades and indiscretions abroad.

The women in Lloyd George's life were more numerous than could be counted on the fingers of his biographers. President Roosevelt had a quiet affair with his secretary while his wife Eleanor was engaged in loftier matters. Egypt had a king in Farouk who was as large a monument to lechery as a pyramid and in Pakistan there was the ridiculous General Yahya Khan who surrounded himself with ridiculous women. We cannot forget Ahmed Sukarno who was no less renowned as a skirt-chaser than as an orator and freedom fighter. It is believed that, when travelling by plane, Nehru rescued a damsel in distress — distress of which the cause was the Indonesian leader. In a history of satyrs Profumo and Parkinson will figure merely in the footnotes.

There must be a number of characters, known and unknown in contemporary India, who will find a place in these footnotes. One must make a distinction between the passions that inspire great men with all their imperfections and the desire that rules smaller men walking on stilts.

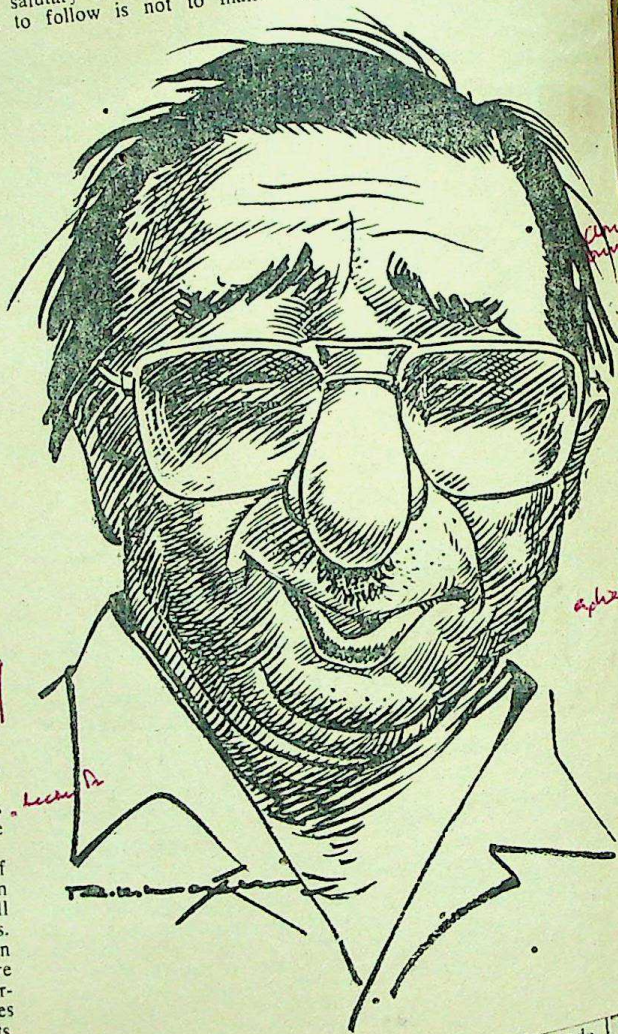
attempted to continue the service but every time I walked into the cabin, Mr. Adik got up from his seat and pointing towards me called me bugger and other such expressions.

Some of us were horrified by the statement and the allegations contained in them. And naturally. Ramrao Adik was no ordinary man. He was a minister and no ordinary minister. He was deputy chief minister. And he was deputy chief minister of no ordinary state but of Maharashtra. He belonged to a party wedded to certain ideals, certain Gandhian ideals. Gandhiji's

ram and Ekhnath, Shivaji, Ranade, Tilak and Gokhale, Phule and Ambedkar been forgotten? Did this state deserve only bleated pygmies strutting about as giants? And weren't developments in Maharashtra part of a pattern that obtained all over the country, a wretched pattern of hypocrisy and cupidity?

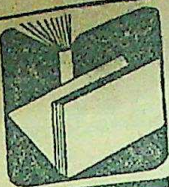
We were somewhat comforted by the suggestion that Adik's alleged misconduct during his trip to Hanover was an "attempt at character assassination" and that there was a "conspiracy" against

Continued on Page IV



Private lives on a platter

Speaking
Volumes



It is a genre in which the British excel, the relaxed and amateurish pursuit of a man's (or woman's) quintessence that is often unexpectedly successful.

ODD but undeniable that a memoir more often than not gets nearer the core of a man than the grimly determined formal biography; and this grimness if nothing else is doubly reinforced when the work is described as "official" or "definitive". The memoir falls rather casually somewhere between such intensity on the one side and the navel-watching subjectivism of an autobiography on the other. It does not aspire to a "final word" in the subject. Nor does it challengingly invite the scrutiny of those who think differently. It is simply the close-up view of someone who knew the subject well, rather on the lines of that people send in to the *Times* for the usually clinical obituary has been published. It has no pretensions to objectivity and yet avoids the incoherence of partisanship or "character" painting, describing the warts and worse but with warmth and acceptance that is undisputed. It is a genre in which the British excel, the relaxed and amateurish pursuit of a man's (or woman's) quintessence that is often unexpectedly successful. A recent example in

paperback was Harold Acton's *Nancy Mitford* and another is *Faces of Philip* by Jessica Mitford (Heinemann, £9.95). Nancy's sister doing for Philip Toynbee what Acton has done so deftly for Nancy. There is in all this a sort of tribal cosiness, an instinctive but unsentimental understanding of each other that one finds among people who share a powerful sense of belonging.

The fascination of seeing how this is done explains in great part why memoirs are so irresistible; and it really does not matter whether the subject is Nancy or Philip or anyone of their kind, since the knowledge, however incomplete, of their private selves, served up in this way, leaves one inexplicably with a feeling of being suddenly enriched. Toynbee wrote book reviews for twenty-five years and the very natural curiosity about the sort of man he was is exactly what this memoir satisfies, in a way in which an ambitious biography cannot possibly do.

The Right To Know

One of the received truths of the final decades of the present century is that governments are obliged to be "open". It is not so much that secrecy is equated with villainy as that the "right to know" has been sanctified to the level of holy writ. It is one of the many ways in which those running the media have successfully conditioned public opinion into accepting something that is less than self-evident. No government worth its salt and conscious of its responsibilities can afford to be more "open" than it needs to be. *Sources Close to the Prime Minister* by Michael Cockerell, Peter Henessy and David Walker (Macmillan, £9.95), is one of those very modernist books which argue that there is no necessary limit to this need; and that, in fact, a limitation of any kind is offensive to the liberal spirit.

The point at which the need ends is variable in the sense that the more autocratic the regime the nearer it is, but that there is a point is most reluctantly conceded, if at all, by the champions of openness. One of the evils of not being open, according to the authors, is the manipulation of news by ministers and ministries with the co-operation of journalists who are happy to go along. As a guide to the intricacies of the lobby and the esotericisms that sustain it this is an entertaining and instructive book; and the Indian reader will immediately think of parallel situations in New Delhi. But it is flawed by its own enthusiasm for the right to know, to the point of failing to realise that there is also a right to conceal.

Digging For News

Almost, one feels, journalists obsessed by this right to know are abdicating their responsibility for finding the news. Should the government take them at their word the profession would become redundant or journalists would be reduced to the level of parasites feeding complacently on the information so readily made available under the doctrine of unrestricted openness. This is a matter that cannot be "coded", or arranged into a "system", or conveniently shaped according to prevailing sanctities. It should be left to the market forces to decide, to wit, whatever results from the government being as secretive as it dares and journalists being as inquisitive as their efficiency and the law allows them to be.

When one is surfeited by the current supply of thrillers and "detectives" where does one turn? Possibly to *The Complete Short Stories of Raffles* by E. W. Hornung (Souvenir, £9.95) the publication of which are presumably banking not only on those old readers who want it once more but on an entire new generation of readers to whom Raffles is

not quite a household word. The probability is that the magic will continue to work. Raffles, the upper class, debonair, burglar was an innocuous opium for the British middle classes at the turn of the century. He was a persuasive realisation of the dream-wish that makes wrong acceptable.

Welcome, Wickedness!

Frequenting West End clubs, the nets at Lord's, and the houses of the upper crust Raffles created the illusion of an anti-social activity that was amiable and containable. There was a reassurance of sorts in decking out wickedness in the clothes and manners of a gentleman, and in promoting it socially to the upper classes. Something of this reassurance mutatis mutandis is psychologically what we are in need of today. Publishers have an undefinable wisdom about these things. Clearly we are ripe, as our fathers and grandfathers were, for Raffles. At the least it is a relief from Perry Mason and the insufferable Della Street.

Up to and including the Edwardian period British talent of every kind had a habit of surfacing variably in every member of an extensive but single family. Such a family was the Stracheys including the Bloomsbury Stracheys Lytton and James, St. Loe Strachey, editor of the *Spectator* and the innumerable Stracheys with an Indian connection. *All Stracheys Are Cousins* by Amabel Williams-Ellis (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £11.95) helps us to sort it out, and get something of the flavour of the upper middle class cultivation that is now so thoroughly period. Not quite so period, however, as the Strachey who, in his retirement from India, lived for thirty years in a London hotel, refusing to give up Calcutta time and eating breakfast at dinner time. Could there have been a more delightful homage to the East?

NJN

THE origin of cards in India is rather obscure. Chess games have references and are mentioned in Indian

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Sophisticated though introduced in the Moghul period, became after 1500 A.D. and preceding centuries the all over the country forms. Indian play believed to have 100 years after E but their unique design suggest that had any influence development, it was one.

It is also suggested that cards, termed ganjifa in Persian for card, were brought into India by the Moghuls. The ganjifa were similar to the cards transferred onto the games were based on exploits and manoeuvres.

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The ganjifa cards are round, varying from 1 to 2 inches in diameter. The cards on this day are hand made of various kinds of materials. In their production, the use of thin wood, animal skin, woven cotton fibre, etc. are common. The cards are decorated with simple and ornately hand drawn designs and are heavily lacquered.

Obviously, the regional variations in general features of the various parts of the country were similar, variations were innumerable. Introduced decorative elements of his own in the numerous honour cards were treated with great skill, sometimes in miniature painted on small, round cards.

Rajasthan, Orissa and a few regions are some of the major card producing areas. The indigenous card weaving is kept alive and thriving by being made by village artisans. The number of weavers has gone from as

Ganjifa Art

ANITA KATYAL describes the rich and colourful tradition of Indian playing cards.

THE origin of playing cards, in Indian art is rather obscure. Dice and chess games have very early references and are even mentioned in Indian mythology.

The first ever mention of playing cards, on the other hand, was made only in the Moghul period, when Babur wrote in his diary: "This evening Meer Ali Korchhi has been sent to Shah Hussein in Sind. Shah Hussein is very fond of playing cards and has asked for the same, which I have sent him."

Sophisticated card games, though introduced only in the Moghul period, became popular after 1500 A.D. and in the succeeding centuries they were found all over the country in various forms. Indian playing cards are believed to have evolved about 100 years after European cards but their unique appearance and design suggest that if the west had any influence at all on their development, it was only a tenuous one.

It is also suggested that Indian cards, termed ganjifa (which is Persian for card games), were brought into India from Persia by the Moghuls. It is said that ganjifa were simple chessmen transferred onto paper as both the games were based on military exploits and manoeuvres.

A more intriguing theory is that cards were invented by the frustrated wife of an Indian maharaja in an attempt to break her husband's habit of fiddling with his beard. As cards occupy both hands and the mind, they were considered an ideal solution to the problem.

The ganjifa cards are usually round, varying from one to five inches in diameter and even to this day are hand-made. A number of materials were used for their production, including paper, thin wood, animal skins, ivory, woven cotton fibre and fish scales. The cards are all delicately and ornately hand-painted and heavily lacquered for durability.

Obviously, there were many regional variations. Though the general features and appearances of the various packs were vaguely similar, variations in design were innumerable, as each artist introduced decorative motifs of his own in the numeral cards. The honour cards were lavishly executed with great imagination and skill, sometimes recreating whole miniature paintings onto the small, round surface of the cards.

Rajasthan, Orissa, Maharashtra and a few regions in West Bengal are some of the main centres of card production where these indigenous card games are still kept alive and the painted cards are being made and sold by the village artisans.

The number of cards in a pack range from as little as 36 to as

many as 360. The suit signs vary among the different packs but are often easier to recognise by their background colours. Since all the cards are hand-made each pack is unique.

For identification, Indian playing cards have been classified according to their subject matter. There are four main groups: military exploits, palace life, religious and mythological themes.

The evolution of the various forms, chronologically speaking, is not certain but it is thought probable that among the oldest is the 'Ramayana', based on the military exploits of Rama. The oldest form of card games in India, the Ganjappa cards of Sonepur (Orissa), reflect, as does chess, two opposing armies. Totaling 144 cards, the pack contains 12 suits of 12 cards each, divided equally into six weak suits devoted to Rama and six strong suits devoted to Ravana (the demon king of Sri Lanka). The entire epic battle between the two kings is reflected in the pack, where the honour cards show the heroes on their chariots or in martial stances while the numeral cards represent the armies of monkeys and the demons.

It is probably from this pack that the game based on imperial life gradually evolved. Called 'Moghul ganjifa', it is said to have been invented by the emperor, Akbar the Great, from an already existing 144-pack. Obviously, he thought this number too cumbersome and reduced it to 96 cards of eight suits of 12. The eight suits represent the eight departments of the emperor's imperial court.

The two court cards are Mir and Vizier, representing the king and prime minister. The suits, again divided into weak and strong, are Surukh, symbolising the treasury, Safet, the silver mint, Tai, the crown and the royal insignia, Chang, the royal music, Ghulam, for the servants of the royal household, and so on. One such set was made in Murshidabad in West Bengal between 1760 and 1770, by the artists of a school working for Indian nawabs and presented to Robert Clive.

During the Moghul period, court artisans are also stated to have pandered to the wishes of their royal masters and produced amusing sets of cards in which domestic pets and animals of the chase figured instead of the usual suit markings.

The 'Dasavatara ganjifa', one of the most decorative and popular card games in the country,



represents in its ten suits of 12 cards each, the ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu. Each suit shows a different avatar of the deity, with the highest card showing Vishnu performing some deed or sitting on a throne.

The ten incarnations of Lord Vishnu are split into four ages, with the fifth age (represented by the tenth suit) yet to come. The first age of the 'satya yuga' (Age of Truth) shows the deity as appearing on earth in the guise of different animals and tells the story of the 'new creation'. The first suit, Matsyavatara, shows the fish whose form Vishnu adopted in his first incarnation. It tells the tale of how god saved Manu, the first human, by towing his ship to safety after a flood.

A typically Indian game of cards, the 'Dasavatara ganjifa' is still played in Orissa and Bengal.

The largest group of Indian cards are the 'Chad packs', of which there are at least 13 different types. 'Chad packs' are found mainly in the South and represent mostly mythological elements. The number of cards in such a pack varies from 36 to 360, containing 18 suits while the court cards show elephants, chariots, horses, deities and consorts.

Experts relate that Krishnaraja III, Wodeyar of Mysore (1794-1869), was absolutely enchanted by board and card games and had

invented several himself. He also commissioned court painters to make such cards especially for him and his family. All these packs with religious and mythological significance, showed the various Indian gods and divinities in their full splendour.

'Ashta Malla' or the eight wrestlers is the name given by the craftsmen of Ganjam district (Orissa) to a special type of ganjifa game, which depicts the legends of Lord Krishna's childhood. On the cards of the pack appear, in a distinct style of folk art, the eight battles fought by Krishna as a baby and as a boy to ward off evil.

This distinct appearance of the Indian cards, however, underwent a change when European playing cards came to the country with the arrival of the colonialists. The alien designs were soon adapted to suit Indian taste and pattern and in many centres of card painting the European suit signs and the court cards like the king, queen and jack, were incorporated in Indian designs. Till then, Indian cards had developed their own distinct suit symbols (like the fish, sword and so on) which had come to be, more or less, standardised. For instance, symbols used in a Dasavatara set, both in Orissa and Rajasthan, were more or less the same.

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Thousand Years Of

Great Holy Pitcher has toured so far through Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh and is now passing through Maharashtra. It seems to have become a symbol of national integrity and communal amity.

SHRIYANS PRASAD JAIN

HERE is nothing grander or more imposing anywhere out of Egypt, and even no known statue surpasses it in height," said the well-known archaeologist Fernandus describing the statue of Lord Bahubali.

The ancient statue of the Jain saint stands in so much grandeur at the top of the Vindhyagiri hill at Shravanabelagola in Karnataka, 'one of the oldest and holiest of pilgrimage centres. Lord Bahubali's statue is 57-1/2 feet high and carved out of a single rock. It is believed to be perhaps the world's tallest monolithic statue. It is popularly known as Gomateshwara. This giant stone image of Lord Bahubali was installed in A.D. by Chamundaraya, who was prime minister and commander-in-chief of the Rachamalla of the Gangavadi dynasty. Chamundaraya was inspired to get this statue erected to fulfill the wishes of his mother, Kalaka Devi. Lord Bahubali has watched the growth of humanity from his serene posture for the last 1000 years. The monolithic statue is

majestic and impressive in its simplicity. This is particularly evident in its contemplative face with a touch of a soft, faint smile.

The statue has inspired millions of devotees and tourists for a thousand years. The Mahamastakabhisheka ceremony — the sacred head-anointing ceremony — of Lord Bahubali normally takes place every 12 years when Shravanabelagola becomes a major pilgrimage centre drawing lakhs of pilgrims and tourists from all over India and abroad.

The Mahamastakabhisheka celebrations of 1981 commencing on February 9 and concluding on March 15 have a special significance because they coincide with the 1000th anniversary of the installation of the statue.

The launching of the Jana Mangala Maha Kalasha or the Great Holy Pitcher on September 20, 1980, at the foot of the Red Fort, Delhi at the hands of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, on its journey to Shravanabelagola marked the beginning of the

great Mahamastakabhisheka celebrations.

"Jana Mangala Maha Kalasha Pravartana Yojana" means the project for the propagation of the Great Holy Pitcher for the enlightenment of the people. Its journey will cover approximately 15,000 kilometres from its starting point at the Red Fort in Delhi to its destination at Shravanabelagola.

The Great Holy Pitcher has toured so far through Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh and it is now passing through Maharashtra. It has been welcomed with ceremonial processions in more than 200 towns and villages till now.

The Holy Pitcher has been received everywhere by high dignitaries, chief ministers, religious heads, men of public life, Central and state ministers as if it was a symbol of national integration and communal amity. This is indeed a matter of pride for the Jains.

The religious and ceremonial aspects of the journey of the Jana Mangala Maha Kalasha apart from its social significance should not be underestimated.

A few notable instances may be cited by way of illustration. In Aligarh, in spite of the atmosphere vitiated by communal riots, the Muslims prevailed upon the organisers of the Holy Pitcher to take its ceremonial procession, and that too, before the mosque

with the accompaniment of the band and distributed *mishti* and *claechi*.

In Udaipur, the Muslims welcomed the pitcher and participated in its ceremonial procession even when they were engaged in Eid festivities on that day. At Shahpura in Rajasthan, the head of a sect of the Hindu community accorded welcome to the Holy Pitcher. In Paunar, Acharya Vinoba Bhave received the Jana Mangala Kalasha himself and gave a message of cordiality. In short, the Janamangala Kalasha was received everywhere by every section of society be it Hindu, Muslim, Sikh and others. Not only did they welcome the Holy Pitcher but also offered flowers and money as a token of their respect and goodwill.

The Gomateshwara Jana Kalyana Trust has been already created and the amount will be utilised on welfare projects of society not restricted to Jains only. The welfare projects will be formulated under the guidance of Elacharya Vidyand Maharaj.

The Jana Mangala Maha Kalasha will reach Shravanabelagola on February 19 where it awaits a massive reception by the government of Karnataka. The Holy Pitcher will be led in a ceremonial procession and people of every faith will join it. Mrs. Indira Gandhi will address a gathering on February 21 at Shravanabelagola.



to Mysore in the south, the area is replete with Jain antiquities. The faith prospered in Karnataka on account of royal patronage. Lord Mahavira himself seems to have visited the Kalyana Desa. An epigraph supports this view, according to Dr. ...

represents the same ideal of an ascetic absorbed in meditation unmindful of the ant-hills that grow around his feet. Badami is only about six miles from Aihole.

Chronologically the monolithic statue at Shravanabelagola is the third one to be raised. Inscription

(Continued on Page V)

... with a serene expression, the hair is curled in short spiral ringlets all over the head while ears are long and large. The shoulders are broad, the arms hanging straight down the sides with thumbs turned outwards. The image is majestic and has impressive grandeur.

"There is no support above the thighs. Up to that point, it is represented as surrounded by ant-hills from which emerge serpents and a climbing plant twines itself round his legs and both the arms terminating at the upper part of the knee. The pedestal is designed to represent an open lotus. The features of the face are most artistic. Considering the large size of the head, which from the crown to the bottom of the ear measures six feet and six inches, the artist was skilful indeed to draw from the black rock the wondrous contem-

Rice, the Director of Archaeological Department who first wrote an introduction to the Epigraphia Carnatika Vol II has stated that "in the absence of more precise information, we may put down the completion of the colossus and of these inscriptions as 983". Prof. S. R. Sharma seems to accept this year. Dr. Salatore besides nothing this date as the opinion of Mr. Narasimhacharya who only revised the addition of Carnatika Epigraphia Vol. II as edited by Rice, has further mentioned that Bahubali Charitrasataka attributed to Memichandra mentions that the statue was constructed in 1028-9. The Kannada edition of Shravanabelagola to which I have already made a reference also agrees with the latter date.

It is worthy of note that Chamundaraya-purana which was composed in 978 does not mention

Epigraphia Carnatika Vol II on page 16. Apart from this monolithic statue, we have two other well-known statues of Gommatas, one at Karkala and the other at Yenur or Venur. The height of the former is 41 ft while that of the latter is 36-1/2 ft. The statue at Karkala was installed in 1432 A. D. and the one at Venur in 1604.

Another has been found in recent years at Yelwal in Mysore district. The small hillock on which it stands is known as *sannara gudda* (hillock of Jaina Saints). It is about 20 ft in height and possesses a facial expression which resembles the one at Shravanabelagola, though it has become rough by long neglect. It is said to have been installed in 1393 A.D. by the patels of Korigehalli as can be ascertained from an inscription found at Bastihalli in Srirangapatna taluka.

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G. H. Keswa

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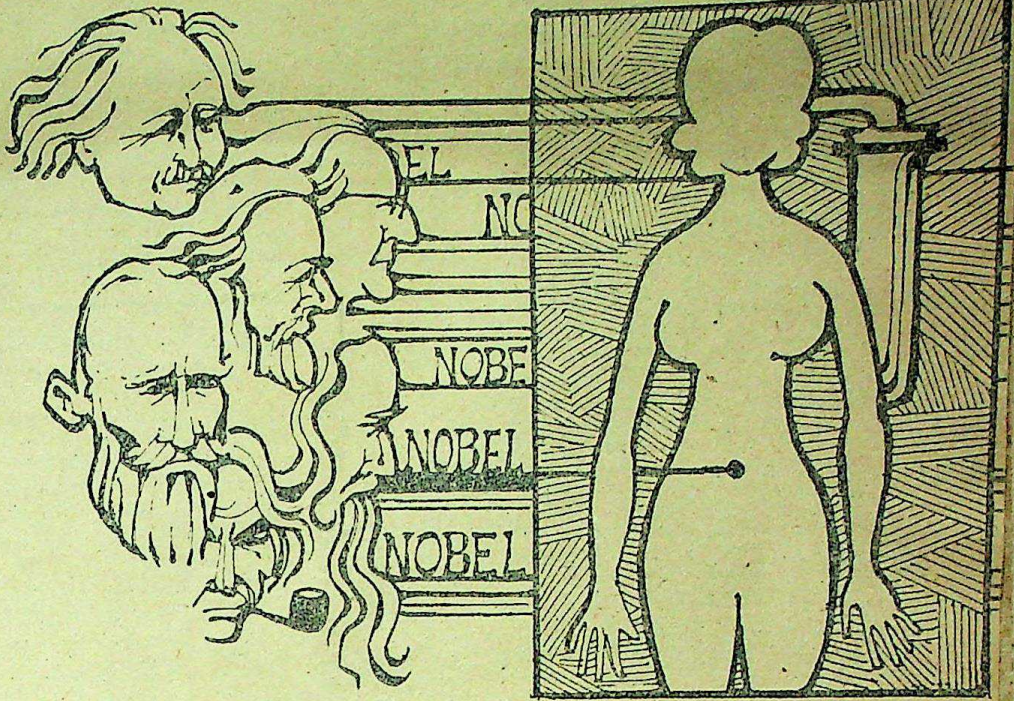
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childish to presume if a woman is impregnated by a 'Nobel sperm', she is likely to produce a Nobel prize-winner. What about the progeny of Einstein? He became a hydraulic engineer of no exceptional standing and the other was a schizophrenic.

G. H. Keswani

There is a proverb in English that a wise man has foolish children. Like many a proverb, it is less than half truth. But I want to say now is the opposite of the proverb also not true. That



Stud Horses For A Hur

at a wise man usually has children, is also not true. Some supposedly wise men, Nobel prize-winners, have responded to the proposition of a businessman of California, Robert Graham, for impregnating childless, "especially intelligent women" with what he calls "Nobel sperms", without the two "partners" together the fond belief that this increase "the people at the top". One of the enthusiastic participants in the programme is 70-year-old biologist William Shockley, who developed the transistor. I say at the outset that this is presumptuous if not a perverted programme, unless the idea is to convert the world into a form of single-track race of some kind.

The idea is an old one. Wild like the dog and the cat were domesticated by successive breeding of individuals with desired attributes of docility, intelligence, speed, etc. The process of artificial selection was only to engender a physical and behavioural attribute. The philosopher Plato who 2,400 years ago, captivated by the idea of the domestication of man, suggested in his *Republic* that ".... the man must cohabit with the woman in as many cases as

Galton, even before the laws of heredity were understood, proposed the system of Eugenics which he cautiously defined as "the study of the agencies under social control that may improve or impair the racial qualities of future generations either physically or mentally." In this century, Hermann Muller, an American geneticist and a friend of Robert Graham, proposed a sperm-bank to "conserve genius", as he put it.

Hard To Define

In fact, it is very difficult to define in any precise manner, words like "best", "mental qualities" and "genius", although physical qualities could be measured, more or less satisfactorily.

It is very difficult to measure human abilities, skills and intelligence. The American psychologist J. B. Guilford has found it necessary to posit 120 factors of intelligence. The sperm-donor Nobelists were, as far as I know, not subjected to the measurement of these factors, before accepting their sperms. In any case, such tests are not altogether reliable. When Alfred Binet first devised the intelligence tests, these were tried on some of the leading lights like the Frenchman Henry Poincaré, one of the greatest minds of recent times. But his rating in the tests was "imbecile". Improvements in testing have been made since then, but they are still far from

being conclusive. As far as I know, very few of the students with IQ exceeding 160 fulfilled the promise of genius in later life.

Let us look more closely at two of the "great" ones. Bertrand Russell could not even make tea, according to one of his biographers, and was generally deficient in mechanical skills. He would not even attempt mathematical puzzles because he thought that he could not solve them easily and that they would just keep buzzing in his mind. Einstein was a dropout from school and could not pass the entrance examination for admission into the Zurich Institute. He was deficient in verbal skills, fond of music but an average violinist so that on one occasion a friend accompanying him told him, "Einstein, can't you count?" Also, Einstein was no exceptional teacher.

What about the progeny of Russell and Einstein, by common consent, regarded as two of the greatest intellects of the century? Both were Nobel-laureates. Russell's second wife, Dora, was certainly more than a "specially intelligent woman" according to the specification of Robert Graham, but their children reached no heights of eminence. Einstein's first wife, Mileva, who was Einstein's only female classmate in the graduate course at the Federal Institute at Zurich for physics and mathematics teaching — a remark-

able thing for a woman to take 80 years ago — bore him two sons. Einstein had no other children. One of the sons became a work-a-day hydraulic engineer of no exceptional standing and the other was a schizophrenic and mentally ill up to his death.

I should imagine that many of the 300 odd Nobel prize-winners in the sciences married "especially intelligent women" but their progeny has not been particularly distinguished. True, there have been five cases of offsprings of Nobelists getting Nobel awards, but this was almost certainly and largely an environmental effect as I shall argue presently. (They were: Curies, Thomsons — the grandfather and father of the present British High Commissioner in India — Braggs, Eulers and Bohrs). In fact a fair amount of intermarriages occur between the members of the families of Nobelists, in their kin and associates.

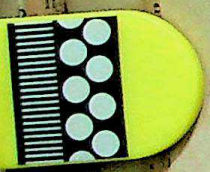
New Equation

The intellectual inheritance of an adult depends on a complex combination of genes, prenatal effects, education and the people one encounters and a host of vagaries of environment. Surely, it is absurd if not obscene, to talk of "Nobel sperms". Discovery of a great new equation to describe nature, finding the cause or cure of a disease, unravelling a new phenomenon and writing great

swimming. Equations are only a small part of human excellence. Einstein was great because he had many other parts, much above his equations.

It is common knowledge that there are even chances that an offspring does not have a particular gene which his parent had, and the dominant genes may come from the father or the mother. So the situation could be even worse than what it was in the story of a beauty and Bernard Shaw. It is said that a beautiful actress wrote to Shaw that a child from their union would have her

talent not through their sperms, but instruction and example. Forty per cent of the laureates have had at least one laureate as "master" or collaborator. It is childish to presume that if a woman is fecundated by a "Nobel sperm" she is likely to produce a Nobelist or a person who will rise to the top. And there surely are many other mightier things to do than the race for the prize. You can of course say that Nobel grapes are hung very high, to which I shall merely say that no sperm is especially qualified to reach them.



news is not a tin of
beans which you can
mass produce and
more. It comes in five
million varieties.

It can a matrix of
lines, text and
illustrations be imposed
on a day's events
so that it is an effective
vehicle for the ideas,
and information the
newspaper thinks its
readers want or ought
to want? Geniuses,
billiards, madmen and
fools have wrestled
with this same problem
since the first
newspaper was
created.

HAROLD EVANS

NEWSPAPER is a mar-
vellous mosaic. For less
than the price of a cup of tea
you can find out what has
happened almost everywhere
— from Washington
to White Star Line. You can be
in the inside information: what
Mr. Jenkins said to Mrs. Thatcher,
what Henry Kissinger told Ronald Rea-
gan. You can buy a semi-detached
house or a second-hand mini. You
can see — and sniff at — photo-
graphs of the latest fashions. And,
with a bit of luck, you can tell the
difference between what you think of teenagers
and trade unions — if your letter
to the editor is published.

For two generations the news-
paper has not had a monopoly of
information, nevertheless, it remains a
vehicle for transmitting
details at speed in printed
form. It gives you options: a tele-
vision or radio channel gives you
linear fragments. With a
newspaper you can flick past what
you don't want and spend as long
as you like, when you like, on
what you like. You can cut out
recipes for world peace
or a shepherd's pie. You can even
amuse yourself with page
four of the Sun, if you want. Te-
levision offers moving pictures and
radio news in a highly
condensed form. But it would
take many hours to broadcast the
contents of a morning's London
Times. You could get the
BBC's Nine O'Clock
News on the front page of The

the Americans go
to sleep in a bigger way.
But 200,000 words in
the New York Times. And
the Sunday editions
are a safari through them.
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Illustrated, the Sun-
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Daily Mirror
FORWARD WITH THE PEOPLE
No. 18,977

The Princess is 25
on Sunday.

Will she wed? When
will she announce
her decision?

COME ON MARGARET!

FOR two years the world has buzzed with
this question:

Will Princess Margaret marry 40-year-old Group Captain
Peter Townsend? — OR Won't she?

Five months ago, Group Captain Townsend told
the Daily Mirror: "... the word cannot come from
me. You will appreciate it must come from other
people ..."

On Sunday the Prin-
cess will be 25. She
could then, if she
wished, notify Parlia-
ment direct of her
desire to marry with-
out first seeking the
consent of her sister
the Queen.

She could end
the hubbub.
Will she please
make up her
mind?



Please make up your mind!

1955

The Front Page

Melbourne as much as in New
York and Darlington. Indeed
geniuses, dullards, madmen and
saints have wrestled with this same
problem for centuries, since the
first newspaper was created.

The immediate ancestor of the
newspaper was the occasional
news-book of the 17th century, a
few sheets that might have fallen
from a book with summaries of
Parliament.

"Tuesday, 30 January. The
day the King was behead-
ed, over against the Banquet-
ing House by White-hall.
The manner of execution,
and what passed before his death,
was thus: he was brought from
St. James about ten in the morn-
ing, walking on foot through the
Park, with a Regiment of Foot
for his guard, with Colours flying,
drums beating, his private Guard
of Partisans, with some of his Gen-
tlemen before and some behind
bare-headed...

And so into the Cabinet Cham-
ber, where he used to lye, where
he continued his Devotion, refus-
ing to dine (having before taken
the Sacrament) only about 12, at
noone, drank a glass of claret
wine, and eat a piece of bread.

coming in Britain. Even the Fall
of the Bastille, at the beginning of
the French Revolution, produced
only:

FRENCH REBELLION

The Times was founded under
the name of the Daily Universal
Register in 1785 by a failed coal
merchant, John Walter, and is the
oldest daily English newspaper.
But even when this great newspa-
per carried, on 22 June 1815,
news of one of the great turning-
points in history, it was still whis-
pering rather than thundering:

"Official bulletin. The Duke of
Wellington's Dispatch dated Water-
loo the 19th of June states that on
the preceding day Bonaparte at-
tacked ... which attack, after a
long and sanguinary conflict, ter-
minated in the complete over-
throw of the Enemy's army, with
the loss of One Hundred and Fifty
pieces of cannon and two eagles."

No headline trumpets, and on
an inside page.

With the boom of the Industrial
Revolution, advertisements had be-
gun to fill the front pages of the
dailies, pushing news aside. But
if they robbed newspapers of dis-
play space they brought money-
making money for money-mongers.

line, built rather like an American
sandwich.

IMPORTANT.
ASSASSINATION OF
PRESIDENT LINCOLN.
THE PRESIDENT SHOT AT
THE THEATRE
LAST EVENING.
SECRETARY SEWARD
DAGGERED IN HIS BED BUT
NOT MORTALLY WOUNDED.

The Chicago Tribune had a 15-
deck head — a record — for the
great fire of 1871. But the Bri-
tish stayed in the doldrums. Even
the pioneer editor, W. T. Stead,
who outraged London by introdu-
cing cross-headings in columns
and personal interviews, was re-
sistant when he presented one of the
greatest exposes of all time. Stead
documented the existence of a
white slave traffic — and he pro-
ved it by purchasing a 13-year-old
virgin himself. Stead's campaign
got the age of consent raised, but
he made a technical error in his
pseudo-purchase and went to Hol-
loway prison for abduction. Later,
he went down with the Titanic,
reading a Bible.

The Americans went further
ahead in dramatic projection when
new methods allowed horizontal
headlines. William Randolph

NOTHING TO BE WRITTEN ON THIS SIDE

It is a strange
by Mountbatten
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following the
of power.
documents tell
story...

by Govind

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Experiments

It is a strange admission by Mountbatten that the governors did not anticipate a holocaust following the transfer of power. Official documents tell a different story...

by Govind Talwalkar

THE authors of *Freedom at Midnight*, Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, were criticised for the undue importance they had given to Lord Louis Mountbatten. But the last Viceroy of India was egocentric, if not a megalomaniac, and the authors were carried away by his imposing personality. This is borne out even in their latest book — *Mountbatten and the Partition of India* — based on tape recorded interviews with Mountbatten and his weekly reports as Viceroy to the British Cabinet. The authors were impressed by the phenomenal memory of Mountbatten but the interviews reveal that his memory was treacherous and the resultant book would go down as his experiment with untruth. The interviewers also contribute to this experiment.

No doubt they travelled 300,000 miles, collected 900 kgs. of official and secret documents, notes, diaries, letters and tapes; spent about two million rupees on travel and research. But like their hero, the authors are given to making tall claims not substantiated with facts. They were given access to Mountbatten's archives where they also came across his official reports to the Secretary of State for India.

But it is not that these documents were unpublished so far. The tenth volume of the "Transfer of Power" series carries official documents including Mountbatten's reports and memoranda upto May, 1947 and the next volume which is expected by next June would have further such documents upto August 1947.

It is also not true that Mountbatten and his papers were totally shut off from scholars. It was H. V. Hodson who first made substantial use of the Mountbatten archives in his excellent study, *The Great Divide*. He had quoted extensively from Mountbatten's reports to the Secretary of State.

Both Lord Ismay and Lord Mountbatten urged Mr. Hodson to undertake the task of writing the history of the end of the British period in India. He was given all the papers which Mountbatten had brought from India. Besides, Mountbatten also spent long hours in discussions with him. Hodson was Reforms Commissioner in India and so knew India and Indians better than the authors of *Freedom at Midnight*. It was almost his last engagement in his official capacity to tour India and make a report on the constitutional reforms which he did. He was thus a witness to the political happenings in India unlike the interviewers who have to reconstruct the past.

Now about Mountbatten's experiments with untruth. Describing his interview with Prime Minister Attlee and Sir Stafford Cripps, Mountbatten says, "I was



NOT AN OBJECTIVE ACCOUNT: Mountbatten flanked by authors Dominique Lapierre and Larry Collins.

quite certain that if I went, something new had to be introduced. First thing, I said, one must have an absolute time limit." Summer or autumn of 1948 was suggested by Attlee but Mountbatten wanted a day to be fixed. Ultimately the day was not fixed but June 1948 was the outer limit for the transfer power. Mountbatten claims that it was on his insistence alone that the time limit was agreed upon. He even takes exception to Attlee's subsequent statement in his BEC interviews that it was he (Attlee) who had thought of the time limit. Mountbatten emphatically says that the time limit was actually his idea and he had great difficulty in getting Attlee to agree to it.

Operation Madhouse

In fact, the credit should go to Lord Wavell. In September 1946, he came to the conclusion that if a time limit was not fixed for the withdrawal of British power, there would be no end to the political bickerings in India. He prepared a detailed plan of withdrawal which was known as the Breakdown Plan and nicknamed by Wavell as "Operation Madhouse." When Wavell was called to London he discussed this plan with the Cabinet India Committee. He told them that, "...it (the Withdrawal Plan) is intended for use not merely when widespread disorder has broken out, but for use in the event of a political breakdown and before disorder has broken out." Before returning to India, Wavell wrote to Attlee to demand assurance on four points. The first one was "That

H.M.G. does recognise that we must make arrangements with a view to transfer of power in India not later than March 31, 1948." As Sir Penderel Moon has rightly pointed out that it was at the insistence of Lord Wavell that the Cabinet had decided to grant independence to India within eighteen months.

Fixing the time limit for the transfer of power was not totally a new idea, as during the war President Roosevelt wanted the British government to announce the date of departure. He told Sir Girija Shankar Bajpai, India's Agent General in Washington, that when U.S. government declared the time limit for their withdrawal from the Philippines, feuds among the local politicians came to an end. He hoped the same would happen in India if the British followed American example. As Deputy Prime Minister Attlee was aware of this exchange between Roosevelt and Bajpai.

Mountbatten takes too much upon himself when he says that Wavell's eyes opened for the first time when he told him that Churchill hated him. The fact was that Wavell was fully aware of Churchill's attitude. Wavell notes in his journal at the end of 1943, that Churchill misunderstood and misrepresented the Arawak operations and then says, "...partly because he has never liked me." After completing an year in the office of Viceroy, Wavell had the courage to write to Churchill to say that "I know you have often found me a difficult and troublesome subordinate. I have not always found

With Untruth

you an easy master to serve."

Mountbatten finds Wavell lacking in the qualities of leadership. Wavell was not flamboyant as the last Viceroy but he was one of the great generals. Without leadership qualities one cannot be a great general. Wavell's failure in India could be ascribed to various factors. Though he was a man of few words and could not get on with the Indian leaders it must be remembered that his mandate was limited. Mountbatten finished the job efficiently, no doubt, but the beginning was made by Wavell.

There is no way to verify Mountbatten's version of his not exchange with Sardar Patel. It was about Sardar's minute to a proposal for an appointment of a Secretary to the Ministry. Mountbatten was furious and threatened to lay down office if Sardar did not take back his note. Sardar had also some angry remarks to make, but it is conceivable that Mountbatten would dare to call Sardar Patel as 'a little upstart' and Patel to stomach this insult. If he had used such language then he must have lost all balance and was rude to the extreme; on the other hand if he told this to the interviewers alone then he was mean. He has conveniently not mentioned that though Sardar withdrew the note, the controversial appointment was not reversed.

No, Says Nehru

Mountbatten claims that V. P. Menon was not in a position to meet his predecessors but was invited to join his staff meetings. However, V. P. Menon, though Reforms Commissioner, was not aware of the draft of the plan sent to London with Lord Ismay. This might have been due to the advice which Mr. George Abell, Private Secretary, might have given to the Viceroy not to take V. P. Menon into confidence. Mountbatten gave the impression to the British Cabinet that the plan was acceptable to the Indian leaders. But this was thrown out by Nehru and Mountbatten was rattled. He then called V. P. Menon and asked him to draft a revised plan. Menon was asked to do so at lunchtime and was to finish it by dinner. This is the plan based on Dominion Status which was acceptable to Nehru and not opposed by Jinnah. Mountbatten's plan would have balkanised India which was rightly discarded by Nehru. Mountbatten admits that he was greatly influenced by Menon but declares that, "I cannot allow history to accept that this Dominion Status solution which at the time was a brain-wave, was just V. P. Menon."

Menon was asked to draft his plan within the parameters laid down by Mountbatten. But it was not that the Viceroy found out the Dominion Status solution. If he had cared to read the document handed over to him by Wavell he could have found out a memorandum written by V. P. Menon and sent to the Secretary of State for India when Wavell was the Viceroy. This was done with the full knowledge and approval of Wavell. Early in 1947 when Mountbatten's appointment was under discussion, the Secretary of State had reported that such a plan was received by

him. But nobody bothered about it including Mountbatten. However, this came in handy when Nehru vehemently opposed Mountbatten's plan, at the discussion stage of which Mountbatten himself called it a 'Plan Balkan.'

The Dominion Status idea was also mooted by Mr. Krishna Menon, independently. He wrote a long letter to Mountbatten at the end of 1946 to emphasise that Dominion Status would be the feasible basis. If Mountbatten really had a phenomenal memory he should have acknowledged the contributions of both the Menons.

Mountbatten was flabbergasted when Nehru rejected his plan out of hand but failed to understand the reasons. He thought that Nehru might have been under the impression that the plan emanated from London. But Nehru opposed the plan as it gave the option to the provinces to opt out of the union and the idea of United Bengal was acceptable to Mountbatten. Viceroy was also prepared to have an independent union of unions of the Princely States. United Bengal idea was sponsored by Surhawardy and was accepted by the local Congress leaders. But it was turned down by the Congress Working Committee. Nehru's opposition was, therefore, quite on the cards.

Mountbatten tells the interviewers that he did not know that Jinnah was living on borrowed time. He says that this was known to Wavell and others but he was not informed. Had he known this, he feels, he could have postponed the final solution so that there would have been a union of India, though a loose one. This is one of the 'ifs' of history and nobody can vouchsafe that Jinnah's followers would have given up the Pakistan demand. On the contrary some of them would have taken an extreme stand in the name of achievement of the departed leader's cherished dream and to also wrest the leadership. Besides, a loose union or federation would have been a disaster.

Mountbatten could not be accused of speeding up the transfer of power and so was responsible for the large scale massacre. There was no alternative to an early transfer of power. But it is a strange admission by Mountbatten that the governors did not anticipate a holocaust. Official documents, though, tell a different story. At least, Sir Evan Jenkins, Governor of the Punjab, had raised a timely alarm and was demanding help from the Army.

Various theories were advanced as to how August 15 was chosen to transfer power. With Mountbatten's clarification that August 15 was the day of surrender of Japan and it was he who accepted the surrender, all speculations would be laid to rest. But this also reveals his narcissistic trait.

Lord Mountbatten, thus, is revealed as being an egoist. The interviewers have taken his words at face value. The result is that truth, objectivity and historical perspective have become casualties.

MOUNTBATTEN AND THE PARTITION OF INDIA: By Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre (Vikas, Rs. 60).



THAT CARY GRANT TOUCH: Dharmendra with Shabana Azmi in "Bichhoo".

portunity of working with professional actors or getting a decent salary for my work.

I would like to afford a crane for a shot once in a while. And I do like a comfortable room to rest in after a gruelling day on location. I know it's very romantic to struggle, to lug around your lights and camera on your shoulders. After years of this, however, you do want stability and grow up.

I see the old order crumbling around me. Audiences are bored to tears with stories as old as their grandmothers. They may not be bored with "dishum dishum." Like westerns in America, that's a permanent part of our cinema. Still, these action movies have to be well-made with new characters and situations. That's why Anandhan Kaaroon and Vidhaata clicked probably. I may not like these films personally but they did have

gory called "middle-of-the-road" cinema? Do you feel embarrassed belonging to it?

Apparently, there is such a category. But should films be given labels? I don't know, sometimes I feel many of us in this category are crows wearing peacock feathers. As a creative person my ambition is to feel free, not wear feathers.

I'm restless by nature. I've hopped from writing to theatre, from T. V. and documentaries to filmmaking. I don't know whether that's a bane or a boon. I'd love to do a musical a la Busby Berkeley or a gripping thriller. I also have a script ready about land labourers called *Disha*. But producers feel Sai can only click with comedy. I hope to get out of this typecasting some day.

Does your creative restlessness have a lot to do with your personal life?

Come to think of it, yes. I didn't have a normal upbringing. You know, I met my father only when I was 25. He's a Russian,

my mother had met him in Geneva and eventually divorced him. Once I was supposed to get a scholarship at Fergusson college in Poona for scoring the highest marks in Sanskrit. The scholarship was only meant for Chitpawan Brahmins and they couldn't make up their minds whether I was a Chitpawan from my mother's side or a Russian. The point is that I've grown up as a loner, given to fantasies. I didn't have a brother or sister. The games I played were different: I could sit on a rocking horse for two hours and dream of princesses, fairies, dragons and castles.

I couldn't stand the idea of an arranged marriage and chose my own husband, a theatre-person. It's another story that the marriage didn't work out. But we're great friends (Arun Joglekar played the heroine's father in *Katha*). Maybe I don't want anything permanent in my relationships or the type of films I do. I live like a gypsy and I want to keep it



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RILAL JAIN

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This observation might read as an obiter dicta to those who have not studied the government's notification and objections to it. So it is necessary to reproduce the notification in part. It says:

"In examining and reviewing the existing arrangements between the Union and the states and making recommendations as to the changes and measures needed, the commission will keep in view the social and economic developments that have taken place over the years and have regard to the scheme and framework of the constitution which the founding fathers have so sedulously designed to protect the independence and ensure the unity and integrity of the country which is of paramount importance for promoting the welfare of the people."

ments for the benefit of the that it has stayed

IT was amidst high hopes for a breakthrough that the seventh round of the U.N. sponsored Geneva talks on Afghanistan had begun nearly three weeks ago. The talks are still on but the earlier optimism has subsided with remarkable rapidity. The shooting down of an Afghan warplane by the two-Pakistani F-16s, acquired from the U.S. is an apt symbol perhaps of the present shape of things.

The irony of it all is that there were, and are, good reasons for an upbeat mood over the prospects of a political solution of the vexed Afghan issue being found at last. In the first place, well before the start of Geneva-7, Kabul and the Kremlin had come through with the long-awaited time-bound programme for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, in return for non-interference in Afghan affairs and U.S. guarantees that the agreed terms of an overall settlement would in fact be implemented.

On the latter two points, as indeed on the question of the return of Afghan refugees in Pakistan to their homes, the necessary "instruments" acceptable to both sides, were already in the briefcase of Mr Diego Cordovez, the U.N. under-secretary-general, who has been playing the role of a painstaking tireless mediator.

All that remained to be done, therefore, was to make the Soviet-Afghan draft of the "instrument" on withdrawals acceptable to Pakistan and the U.S., and the entire package deal would have been neatly tied up. This, it was generally expected, would be accomplished during Geneva-7 because though a gap existed between the positions of the two sides, it could not be considered unbridgeable.

Indirect talks between the two sides are, of course, confidential. Even so, it is known that the Soviet Union has suggested a phased programme of withdrawal of troops to be completed in four years. But this is clearly a bargaining ploy as is Pakistan's terse demand that the withdrawals should be completed within six months of the cessation of arms supplies and other assistance to the "Mujahideen" fighting the Soviet-backed Afghan regime in Kabul. A compromise on an 18-month deadline is thus considered feasible, especially in view of a Pakistani statement that withdrawals should take place "in months, not years".

Bargaining Ploy

The second reason for optimism over a possible resolution of the Afghan issue through the Geneva process is even more striking. On the very eve of Geneva-7, Mr Babrak Karmal was replaced by 39-year-old Mr Najibullah as the leader of the ruling party in Afghanistan and a positive new element was thus introduced into the situation. The removal of the controversial Mr Karmal was obviously at Soviet initiative and the signal of the Soviet Union's willingness to get the Afghan problem out of way on honourable terms could not have been clearer.

Pakistan, backed by the U.S., has consistently taken the position that it would never have face-to-face talks with the Karmal regime because this would amount to conferring legitimacy on a head of

government who has ridden to power on a Russian tank". Afghanistan, for its part, had served notice several months ago that Geneva-7 would be the last exercise in "proximity talks" and that further negotiations between Kabul and Islamabad must be direct. Against this backdrop, Mr Karmal's removal not only makes sense but also must be considered to be an important concession by Russia to Pakistani and American sentiment.

There is, of course, another way of looking at the twin Soviet moves—offering of a time-table for troop withdrawal and making the leadership change in Kabul. Evidently, Mr Gorbachov and his close advisers feel confident that a Marxist regime in Afghanistan, headed by the dynamic Mr Najibullah rather than Mr Karmal, would be able to survive even in the absence of Soviet troops.

Proximity Talks

Normally, all this should have been a basis for a solution of the Afghan imbroglio being clinched because an important assumption underlying the proximity talks all through has been that the post-settlement Afghanistan would have a government friendly to the Soviet Union and nothing would be done by any party to use Afghanistan as a base for operations directed against Moscow.

However, life is not always dictated by logic. The talks at Geneva have not progressed as they were logically expected to. A last-minute miracle that would reverse the current pessimistic assessment is unlikely. The question therefore arises: what has happened to turn well-founded hopes into dupes?

A short answer to the question would be that, as during Geneva-III in the summer of 1983, so during Geneva-7, there seems to have been a sudden change of heart on the part of Pakistan at a very crucial juncture in the negotiations. Moreover, now as then, the impetus for the change appears to have come from the U.S. though this time there have also been some domestic Pakistani considerations at work.

The sequence of events by itself is revealing enough. Some days before the start of Geneva-7, General Zia-ul-Haq stated publicly, for the first time in six years, that he believed the Soviet Union to be sincere in its professed desire to withdraw from Afghanistan. Indeed, he went so far as to remind the sceptics that in the past the Russians had withdrawn from Austria and Azerbaijan. And he went on to declare that his country as well as others must do all they could to help the Russians get out of Afghanistan. No wonder the Pakistani foreign minister, Sahibzada Yaqub Ali Khan, spoke in highly encouraging and optimistic terms just before leaving for Geneva.

In a short few weeks, however, Gen. Zia changed his tune. He declared that the Russians had no intention of withdrawing from Afghanistan. He also complained of both the violation of Pakistani airspace by Soviet and Afghan pilots and of Soviet-Afghan bombing of "alleged supply dumps of the mujahideen" in Pakistani territory. The shooting down of an Afghan Sukhoi-22 bomber by Pakistani F-16s later was obviously meant to but-

teress the complaints on the strength of which the current talks at Geneva are being resuspended as of no consequence.

It may be a mere coincidence that immediately before Gen. Zia's second statement, reversing his earlier stand, the U.S. under-secretary of state for political affairs, Mr Michael Armacost, had paid a visit to Islamabad. But there can be no doubt that the U.S. has little interest in facilitating a settlement of the Afghan issue and this message must have been delivered to Pakistani rulers through various channels, not necessarily through Mr Armacost alone.

It is doubtful if any responsible American still believes that Afghanistan can be converted into Russia's Vietnam. But the idea of keeping the Russians bogged down in Afghanistan and thus "bleeding them white" has obvious appeal in Washington.

The stepping up of the CIA's assistance to Afghan rebel groups via Pakistan, typified by the supply to them of deadly Stinger missiles, speaks for itself. That the Soviets have readjusted their tactics to the changed situation—aircraft taking off from Kabul and Bagram air base do so with helicopters on either side firing flares into the air to deflect and destroy any Stinger aimed at them until the planes reach a safe height does not appear to have made any dent in U.S. policy.

The U.S. has good reasons to believe that in the competition with the other superpower it has an upper hand these days. In the circumstances, it does not suit America to help the Soviet Union get off the hook in Afghanistan. As it happens, president Reagan has taken the U.S. Congress to task for sending a "wrong signal" to Moscow by slashing the administration's defence budget by \$35 billion. What kind of a signal will the conclusion of a settlement on Afghanistan at Geneva be?

Above all, a solution of the Afghan problem would be unacceptable to the Reagan administration until the Nicaraguan situation is resolved, to its satisfaction. Obviously the theory of linkages dies hard in the realm of superpower relationship.

Wrong Signal

Against this backdrop it would be natural for the U.S. to see to it that its Pakistani allies do not strike a separate deal with the Soviet Union at Geneva over Afghanistan. The Zia regime, of course, knows on which side its bread is buttered, and any defiance by it of American wishes on an issue of great importance to the U.S. is therefore unlikely even at the best of times. But the times, from Gen. Zia's point of view, are no longer of the best, what with the mass upsurge triggered by Ms Benazir Bhutto's homecoming and the further complications created by the likes of Mr Fakhr Imam, the national assembly speaker whom the general wishes to oust.

Altogether, therefore, the outlook at Geneva appears unpromising, to say the least. But those who find this state of affairs to their liking must also know that if, as is likely, Geneva-7 ends infructuously, the negotiations over Afghanistan might remain disrupted for a long time to come.

Afghan Issue And Geneva-7

Fast Eroding Optimism



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To Reserve Or

The need for a national debate may sound inane, repetitive and, indeed, hypocritical. But what is the alternative?

We publish here our interviews with Jagjivan Ram, Y. B. Chavan and L. K. Advani of the Opposition, Minister for Parliamentary Affairs — Bhishina Narain Singh of the ruling Congress (I) and C.P.M. Chief Minister of Kerala E. K. Nayanar. Former Prime Ministers Morarji Desai and Charan Singh declined to speak on the subject. The Prime Minister has already declared that the question of reservations for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes is non-negotiable.

Photograph: T. S. Nagarajan

It is genocide. —Jagjivan Ram

THE veteran Harijan leader has described the non-reservationist agitation in Gujarat as "genocide"—a case of 90 per cent of the population attacking a small socially ostracised and deprived community of only 8 per cent.

Mr. Jagjivan Ram argues that it is the official position of a person, and not his wealth, that gives him the social status. A rich man who belongs to a lower caste will not get the respect of a person coming from the upper caste, but if he occupies a high official position, he will get the respect of his upper caste subordinates. In this the social disabilities against the lower castes are being gradually broken.

It has been conceded that 30 years of reservation has not produced the desired results. It has not brought about any appreciable change in the social, educational and economic status of the scheduled castes and tribes. The hope that if a few families among them rose in stature, it would benefit the entire community, has proved to be wrong.

J. R.: The presumption is not wholly correct. It has given a sense of pride to these communities as also the appointment of even a few persons to high posts is working as a catalytic agent for social change. Besides, how can any sensible person expect economic and educational progress of these communities without special efforts in this regard?

At the time of independence, the social, economic and educational backwardness of the people had a basis in caste. After 30 years, it is found that poverty is no more exclusive to this group. According to government figures, 83.13 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line. Harijans and Gidians comprise only 21 per cent of the population. Taking all these as living below the poverty line, we get 77 per cent non-Harijans who are at the same level.

J. R.: What is meant to be proved by this argument? Reservation is not meant to solve the unemployment problem. It is meant to ensure for them a share in with all advantages we have made to go to evolve the interests of all sections of the people of Kerala.

in the governance of the country as also give them a social status.

To illustrate the point, a Brahmin will not salute a millionaire Yadav (member of the backward class), but a Brahmin constable will salute a Yadav sub-inspector.

Do you feel that a poor Jain faces the same humiliation in society as an untouchable?

J. R.: Vested interests, specially upper caste Hindus, are confusing the issue by trying to make it an economic issue which it was never meant to be.

May I know whether a member of the scheduled caste even today can start a sweetmeat shop or a Dhaba (eating place)?

J. R.: Why not? Has it been proved by the survey or investigation that scheduled castes/tribes are born incompetent and upper

Interviews by KIRIT BHAUMIK and SUBHASH KIRPEKAR.

castes were justified by those who generally are not free from caste prejudice and in many cases observe untouchability in spite of it being abolished by the Constitution.

While the need for reservation at the point of entry in service is recognised, should it be extended to promotions as well as to post-graduate studies?

J. R.: Regarding post-graduate studies, are scheduled caste/tribe students not required to pass the same examination/test which other students are required to do? If they pass the same examination how does the question of incompetence and inefficiency arise and how is human life likely to be endangered by scheduled caste/scheduled tribes doctors? It will be good for the nation if the social consequences of the tirade that has been started by the upper caste Hindus in the press and on the platform is fully appreciated. Scheduled castes/tribes have no papers, they have no editors, journalists and columnists to carry on constant agitation.

We have to compensate for the backlog of centuries.— Y. B. Chavan

MR. Y. B. CHAVAN, leader of the Congress (U) parliamentary party, is of the view that the movement against reservations in Gujarat is "misguided." In his view, 33 years is too short a time in the life of a country as vast as India to produce the desired results from reservation. Indeed, he points out that Parliament only recently sanctioned the extension of reservation by another 10 years. Since Parliament reflects the will of the nation, he thinks it is improper for anyone to start an agitation on this issue. "We have to compensate for the backlog of centuries," Mr. Chavan says. He thinks it is entirely wrong to compare the achievement of 30 years with this enormous backlog of centuries during which the backward classes were suppressed and exploited. The problem, he pleads, must be looked at from the wider national perspective and not from a narrow sectarian approach.

It is Mr. Chavan's view that the situation in Gujarat was rather ineptly handled in the beginning—without understanding the problem. The agitators should not have been directly or indirectly encouraged. Had that approach been followed, this situation would not have arisen.

Mr. Chavan also thinks it is imperative that the government provides the economic opportunities to the Harijans for their progress, education and employment. Employment is the crux of the problem. Millions of jobs need to be created by the government to solve the colossal problem of unemployment.

Unfortunately, Mr. Chavan says, the planning process has not

made unemployment a central problem around which the appointees on the basis of reservation evolves. He describes the Six-Plan as just a catalogue of schemes in different fields. Where it fails is in not evolving schemes which would have yielded results in terms of human benefits.

It is also Mr. Chavan's view that economic backwardness needs to be considered as a factor to reckon with when preparing plan to help the backward. When he was Chief Minister of Maharashtra, he recalls, this principle had been introduced and children of parents earning less than Rs. 1,200 a year were provided free education right upto college level.

It is not only reservation but many other activities that were expected to produce results. But they have not.

I do not subscribe to the theory that raising the stature of a few families will change society. Now the time has come to consider the benefits not in terms of a few families but for each family. That is why, 10 years ago, the Congress party had come up with the slogan of providing one member from each family a job.

In the social sense, backwardness can be said to be caste-based but in the economic sense, it cannot be said that caste can be taken as a basis. Much more effort is needed for the remaining 27 per cent. They also need steadfast attention. But not at the expense of the 21 per cent Harijans. They have to be helped without depriving the Harijans.

I can say that the process of reservation started in my time when

communities. In fact, the scale pauperisation in the rural areas has engulfed considerations of the forward communities. A solution to this problem cannot be found within the work of the caste system.

A crisis of capitalist growth in India has caused crisis in the system as well. It seems to be breaking at its seams. We are

grass-root level.
K. C. J.: The forward and the backward communities are sharply divided over this issue. Do you think differences could be resolved. And if so how?

E. K. N.: The differences between them appear irreconcilable. But I think a solution to this problem is possible. For this I think we have to go into the details of the concrete situation that is available in each state. I feel the situation in Kerala is radically different from that of Rajasthan for instance. And so any attempt to have a ready-made all-India solution would satisfy neither.

Here we will have to bear in mind the provision in the Constitution. We will also have to take into consideration the position of backward and scheduled communities and their numerical strength and the advance they have made during the past years. It is an undeniable fact that backward and scheduled communities in India have not acquired their due share in the administration of our country. Till they acquire such a position, the system of reservation will have to continue as a means of assuring social justice to a considerable section of our people. As far as the new problems are a creation of the development, we have to deal with them as they arise.





A QUESTION-MARK OVER THE FUTURE OF URDU

By HAMDI BEY

THOUGH the non-Congress ruling coalitions in both U.P. and Bihar fell apart on several points, including that of the status of Urdu, so far the future of that language has not become one of the issues for campaigning in the elections due to be held three months hence in those States.

The silence on the future of Urdu may be due to an anxiety on the part of Hindi enthusiasts to avoid bickerings in the North while the South continues to be opposed to the imposition of Hindi. Hence the only linguistic electioneering postures have been taken by Mr Nijalingappa, and though ostensibly addressed to the South they are really intended to assure potential Congress supporters in U.P. and Bihar. The other reason for the present quiet on the anti-Urdu front in the Hindi-speaking States might be that this, so far disliked, language may come in useful for the speakers of Hindi in circumventing the three-language formula. After all it would be easier for speakers of Hindi to learn Urdu than to learn Tamil.

The correct perspective on Urdu can be only historical, and it is only that aspect of Urdu literature which can be discussed in these columns for, unlike Bengali, few works in Urdu have been translated into English. The two main handicaps under which Urdu labours are that no region within residual India (not even Delhi) has come forward to claim it, and that it was born too late.

We in this article are more concerned about the second handicap than the first; the circumstances attendant to it have coloured to a great deal Urdu literature. According to Muhammad Husain Azad (1830-1910), Urdu's first authentic historian, this particular literary tradition began with Wali (1667-1707) and became fashionable after 1720. Dr Muhammad Sadiq, its latest historian in his *History of Urdu Literature* (1964) agrees with the first and says that "the lines ascribed to Amir Khusrau (1253-1325), besides being all too few, have been unconsciously modified through generations of oral transmission; and obviously it is dangerous to build too far on them".

URDU IGNORED

Till the time of Emperor Muhammad Shah (1720-48) the Muslims of India had ignored the need of having a language of their own. The Persian Muslims had felt such a need and giving up Arabic had developed Persian to serve both national and Islamic needs by the time of Mahmud Ghazni (998-1030) and Firdausi (940-1020). That development gave Persia the look of a nation-State. Indian Muslims during the Mughal period, during the Wazarat of Sayyid Abdullah (1712-20) was probably instrumental in encouraging the trend. The sack of Delhi by the Persian Nadir Shah in 1739 accentuated the aversion to Persian—a sentiment which lasted till the time of Rammohun Roy for when the choice of an oriental medium of instruction was being discussed

Both those who seek the preservation of Urdu as the repository of Muslim culture in India and those who oppose it as a sectarian language base their arguments on the narrow trends in Urdu literature between 1858 and 1938, ignoring its earlier or later trends. History has queered the pitch for Urdu. If writers alone were to decide its fate it is quite likely that it would break out of its sectarian shell, but unfortunately, its destiny will be determined not by writers but by politicians. And this poses a question mark over the future of Urdu.

there were advocates for Arabic but none for Persian. However Persian influence never disappeared altogether and both Ghalib (1797-1869) and Iqbal (1876-1938) for some years wrote in Persian in preference to Urdu.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

While Urdu (in fact Hindi adapted for use by a Muslim community) was taken up at the Mughal Court too late for it to become a national language it developed rather early (compared to other modern Indian literatures, Wali was a little over a century earlier than Henry Derozio) for it to be open to the impact of the West. We will be observing the centenary of the death of Urdu's most important poet, Ghalib, next year while seven years ago we celebrated the centenary of the birth of Bengal's greatest poet, Tagore. The respective spans of life of these two poets illustrate the earlier development of Urdu. There were several important Urdu poets in the decadent Mughal tradition before Ghalib, and at least two after him, Momin (1800-51) and Dagh (1831-1905). It is possible that when Michael Madhusudan Dutt (1824-73) expressed himself enthusiastically about the martyrdom of Hassan and Hussain being excellent subjects for great poetry he was giving evidence of his acquaintance (and probably dissatisfaction) with the work of two of his Urdu contemporaries, Anis (1802-74) and Dabir (1803-75) who then enjoyed much fame by writing poems on that subject in a specialized form called *marsiya*.

Urdu writing came under Western impact only after 1857, to be precise with the *Manifesto* issued in 1874 by Muhammad Husain Azad and its first modern writers were Sayyid Ahmed Khan (1817-98), Hali (1837-1914), Shibli (1857-1914) and Muhammad Husain Azad. The last named wrote his history of Urdu poetry in 1881 and having received instruction from

and later trends. Hali, who gave early expression to this bias, admitted his own narrowness while in 1889 recalling his memories of Ghalib. He wrote: "At this stage of my life, I was wholly given to religious fanaticism and was a prey to dogma and orthodoxy. I considered the Muslims the very cream of creation and the Sunnis, from among the 72 sects of the Muslims, the choicest of them all." This admission however came ten years after the *Mussadas*.

Despite Hali's work on him the bias was so strongly operative that the pagan Ghalib did not enjoy the fame he deserved till about 1920. And this happened to a literary movement which in 1874, when Azad's *Manifesto* was put forth, had set out to create a "non-sectarian poetry". It can be argued that the choice of Hindi in 1875 (four years before the *Mussadas*) as the literary vehicle for a Hindu revival by Dayanand Sarasvati (1824-83) prescribed a Muslim ambit for Urdu to flourish in and that the Urdu writers were participants in a general revivalism in the country, which had come after 1857 and was obtrusively Hindu in all languages other than Urdu.

Apportioning blame is of little use but one cannot but notice how historical events queered the pitch for Urdu literature, how a middle class in the first 25 years of its liberation (by the British and not by its own efforts) was modernist but later turned its back on all expansion of the Urdu clientele. It turned to religion to restore the loss of earthly power, the feudal authority from which it had been freed but in regard to which it later came to adopt a nostalgic veneration. In its intense religiosity it frowned upon love poetry; it tabooed music more effectively than Aurangzeb had been able to. Because women may have to appear on the stage it eschewed the writing of plays. As Dr Sadiq puts it: "The middle class was essentially puritan and, at any rate, in the realm of poetry nothing so fully found favour with it as communal verse."

Left to itself Urdu writing should outgrow the narrow limits prescribed for it by earlier generations and hence the pertinent question whether Urdu would get a chance to break out of its sectarian shell, the one it acquired during an important period of 80 years in its not too long a history. Unfortunately the answer does not lie with writers who discard literary fashions as often as women change their hair-do but with politicians who can stir up the masses which read neither Urdu nor Hindi.

Committee and National Secretary of the Association of South East Asian Nations has been chosen Ambassador to Singapore.

EDUCATION NO REFORMER, SAYS SOCIOLOGIST

TORONTO, Nov. 4.—A New York City sociologist says a three-year, \$200,000 study he undertook has destroyed what he describes as a myth.

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Ram Swarup

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Ram Swarup

is not a botanical work. The Beautiful Tree is the given by Mahatma to the system of edu- that prevailed in India the British introduced. He said before an in London in 1931 that under the Bri- that the Indians were illiterate after a hundred of British rule than they before.

Philip Hartog, once vice- of Dacca Univer- and one of the founders of School of Oriental and Af- Studies, controverted this and wanted Gandhiji it and produce his autho- his statement. Gandhiji best as far as his leisure ed. He sent two articles by a famous educationist Rana Gupta from the old Young India; he deputed Shah to reply to him but satisfied Sir Philip. has now given a re- this book could be consider- posthumous reply by to Sir Philip, the dis- who too is no more.

placed in that imme- context, the book is an im- historical document in right, having a great on a great national ques- deals with an alternative al system that prevailed ago and from which nations too may derive a particularly at a time the educational system all over has become a and its failure is writ is felt that the present produces militarists, scien- technicians, and not and humanists.

the Indian viewpoint, the even a more pressing from India, following the system, is seeking univer- but has not achiev- the system she has adopt- expensive, far too expen- her resources; it is also ed in her tradition, not ed to her future needs, far as higher education d, the universities are places for any worth- education. The teachers, the non-teaching on strike by turn most round the year.

book also corrects the current but errone- the view that In- illiterate before the book over and that what- was there was a of the Brahmins. The all very comprehensive ed, proves the two to be baseless. The fact comparatively speaking, Europeans of that time literate than they even the British. Though had already departed the old school system, were still impressive. Thomas Munro said the Madras region village had a school. said that Bengal

is due to whom we have learnt among the lower ranks instruction by one of unerring and economi- which has ever been

and Bihar had "100,000 village schools." C. L. Prendergast and Dr. G. W. Leitner made similar observations about the presidency of Bombay and the newly conquered Punjab respectively, even at a much later date.

The book gives data regarding the school system as it prevailed in 1823 and before this date in the Madras presidency which at that time included several regions which are now part of Orissa, Karnataka, Kerala and the Andhra Pradesh. This is the core data which is also being presented for the first time in its fullness. To reinforce his conclusions, Dharampal also gives long extracts from W. Adam's three Reports on State of Education in Bengal (1835-38) — data which however has appeared before and more recently only last year (One Teacher, One School edited by Joseph DiBona, Biblia Impex Private Ltd., New Delhi). Long extracts from G. W. Leitner's History of the Education in the Punjab are also reproduced, which too prove the rule. The book does not give data regarding another region, Bombay, which however has already been published by R. V. Parulekar in his A Source-Book of History of Education in the Bombay Province, Survey of Indigenous Education (1820-30) and tells no different story.

The British government was taking under its control different segments of Indian national life. The indigenous educational system, a very important sector, too could not escape its grip. But before it was done, the company wanted to know more about it. So Sir Thomas Munro, the Governor of Madras, ordered an inquiry in June 1822.

Soon the data was collected and the reports began coming from the 20 districts of the Presidency: one (Ganjam) Oriya-speaking; two Kannada-speaking; one Malayalam-speaking (Malabar); six Telugu-speaking; and 10 Tamil-speaking. All these reports were consolidated and in March, 1826, Sir Thomas Munro prepared his minute. He found

Though the indigenous system had fallen on bad days and was under great stress when the British began to take interest in it, it still retained some of its old vitality and relevance. The system was functional and served social and intellectual needs.

that in the territory under his jurisdiction, there were 12,498 schools and colleges, teaching 1,88,650 pupils. Taking into account private coaching (in Madras district, the number of students taught at home was five times the number taught in schools), he concluded that one male out of three of school-going age attended a school. This was a high ratio compared with European nations of that time. His conclusion was later corroborated by Adam who studied one thana

46 per cent teachers. Higher education of the type and on the scale typified by such names as Nalanda and Taxila was already a thing of the past. These were international univer-

One Teacher



WHEN ALL WORK WAS HOMEWORK: "Higher education of the and Taxila was already a thing of the past... The new institutions of individuals who admitted a small number of scholars and taught them." "Children of Dunbar Sama", 1880.

in Bengal in depth and found that 11 per cent of the total population of this thana could more than sign their names. A very high rate of literacy indeed for any period and for any region.

Many observers remark that an average Hindu loved learning. Adam says that the desire to give education to their male children was "deeply seated in the minds of the parents even of the humblest classes." In another place, he says that "it is deemed an act of religious merit to acquire a knowledge of the Hindu shastras, or to extend the know-

teacher. Here they live with their teacher and beg for their food. "They receive some portion of alms daily for years at the door of every Brahmin in the village, and this is conceded to them with a cheerfulness which considering the object in view must be esteemed as a most honourable trait in the native character... We are undoubtedly indebted to this benevolent custom for the general spread of education amongst a class of persons whose poverty would otherwise be an insurmountable obstacle to advancement in knowledge." Mr. L. G. K. Murray, Collector of Madras, reports that the "children are sent to school when they are about five years old and then continuance in it depends in a great measure on their own mental faculty, but it is generally admitted that before they attain their thirteenth year of age, their acquirement in the various branches of learning are uncommonly great, a circumstance peculiar only to the Hindu castes."

Though the indigenous system had fallen on bad days and was under great stress when the British began to take interest in it, it still retained some of its vitality and relevance. The system was functional and it served social and intellectual needs. Teachers were modest, frugal, unassuming. Teaching was still a vocation, not a business.

According to the... A new use who indigenous in lucra- new divi- Prestige attached to English and to what it stood for. Local cultures lost prestige and power. The disastrous consequences are there for all to see.

notably Tamil-speaking area, there were 671 schools teaching Tamil, 38 teaching Kannada, 25 teaching Telugu, 14 teaching Hindi and 10 teaching Persian. There was no "class" system

attached to English and to what it stood for. Local cultures lost prestige and power. The disastrous consequences are there for all to see.

Sparks of the Russian spirit

FOR a good many years now the literary critic Joseph Frank — also a professor of comparative literature at Princeton — has been working on a multivolume biography of Fyodor Dostoyevsky. Mr. Frank's second volume, *The Years of Ordeal*, spanning the decade of Dostoyevsky's imprisonment and exile in Siberia, is even better than the justly praised first one. Everything about this ambitious enterprise is splendid — its intellectual seriousness, its command of the Russian setting and sources, its modesty of tone, its warm feeling. Mr. Frank is clearly on the way toward composing one of the great literary biographies of the age, at least the equal of Walter Jackson Bates' biography of Keats and Richard Ellmann's of Joyce.

Drawing upon Russian sources that previous English-language biographers have overlooked or neglected, Mr. Frank offers fresh materials about Dostoyevsky's intellectual and literary development. He has made good use of official Czarist documents about the notorious Petrashevsky case, involving the arrest in 1849 of a group of intellectual "subversives" — the young Dostoyevsky among them — by the police of Czar Nicholas I. These documents support Mr. Frank's argument that for a time after his arrest Dostoyevsky remained a staunch rebel, shrewdly resisting and sparring with the authorities. One member of the investigating commission, General Rostovtsev, described the prisoner Dostoyevsky as "clever, independent, cunning, stubborn."

Mr. Frank has also drawn upon little noticed letters, Alexey Pleshcheev, a former adherent to the Petrashevsky circle, wrote in 1856-57 to Dostoyevsky, who by then had served his prison term but was still enduring compulsory Siberian exile. From such materials, as well as from his rich account of 19th-century Russian intellectual history, Mr. Frank develops a complex analysis to show Dostoyevsky's involvement in a major cultural dispute of the time — between those writers favouring "strong" and those favouring "weak" fictional heroes. On the face of it literary, this dispute, as almost always in Russia, had deep political implications. The segment of the Russian intelligentsia hoping for an intransigent struggle against Czarism favoured "strong" heroes prepared for resolute action; another segment, though also opposed to Czarist repression, still felt un-

found in them sparks of "the Russian spirit" — a vocation for suffering, a gnarled sense of compassion. He learned to respect the solemnity with which they celebrated religious holidays. And with incomparable brilliance, Dostoyevsky probed the feelings of his fellow prisoners, the distorted ways in which they released their hunger for freedom and a bit of dignity.

How fully — the question must occur to every reader — did Dostoyevsky achieve that purifying vision of Christian love toward which he came to aspire during his Siberian captivity? About this matter Mr. Frank engages in a polemic with one of Dostoyevsky's keenest Russian critics, Lev Shestov, who wrote

Dostoyevsky was frightened, unhinged, terrified when he first settled into his Siberian barrack. He shrank from the brutal convicts ... Yet, as the months passed, he came to see signs of goodness in them—a vocation for suffering, a gnarled sense of compassion.

by Irving Howe



RELIGION OF HUMANITY: "Christ became his leading light, but Rousseau and Fourier kept lurking at his elbow." (Above) Fyodor Dostoyevsky.

easy before the prospect of revolution and therefore sympathised with "weak" heroes. His own radical inclinations softening during the years in Siberia, Dostoyevsky allied himself with the partisans of the "weak" heroes, perhaps as a step along his journey toward reconciliation with the Czarist regime.

In 1848 the 27-year-old Dostoyevsky was arrested, together

with the other members of the Petrashevsky circle. Tame enough by later standards, this group had been excited by hopes for abolishing serfdom at home and by the "humanitarian" and vaguely Utopian Socialist literature drifting over from France. Within the Petrashevsky circle there nestled a tiny cell headed by Nikolay Speshnev that proposed to begin political action; it had

Farren (Schenkman Publishing Co., Cambridge, Massachusetts, £ 6.95)

MANY words have been expended on the dangers of the imminent nuclear holocaust. What is refreshingly different about the verbal outpourings contained in this book is their spontaneity and simplicity. It is, indeed, "the literary equivalent of a mass meeting".

Ordinary people of all ages and climes and classes—poets, professors, players, welders, et al—vocalise their fears of a doomsday which they have done nothing to deserve, and their hopes for a tomorrow when humanity will prevail over hatred.

even secured a... which to print... peasants to revolt... had attached himself... spiratorial nucleus... was also, Mr. Frank... tionally agitated by... had pledged himself... For he had already... mark as a writer... mising fictions as... The Double, and... understandably... might cut short his... Now, locked away... ed Peter-and-Paul... Petersburg, Dostoyev... "Explanation" of... the investigating com... did not recant; he... ably, to shield his... friends. He succeeded... in blinding the arch... true character of the... cell. His "Explana... candid and very... like something a dis... time might have w... "But of what im... Evidently, that I... about politics, the... sorship etc. But... spoken and not... these questions in... did I study, why... awaken my curious... have the right... opinion?"

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--MARK TWAIN

August 7, 1983

THE SUNDAY PIONEER

Trapped by degrees

OUR educational system is like the weather. Every one complains about it but no one really does anything about it. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has again deplored the present educational system in India which churns out millions of unemployed and unemployable youth. She very aptly pointed out in her recent Allahabad address that no other country produces so many graduates with no special aptitude for any profession. It will, however, be pertinent to inquire what the powers-that-be, including the present Prime Minister, have done all these 36 years after independence to remould or to revamp a wholly outmoded neo-colonial system which is a part of the British legacy. If anything, the Establishment has staggeringly multiplied the number of universities and degree colleges. Proliferation of these so-called "temples of learning"—graduate manufacturing mills, to be precise—has been mainly politically-motivated. Education at the higher level has been wholly commercialised. Private colleges are money-making machines and in the guise of capitation fees greedy and unscrupulous "educationists" have fleeced thousands of students off crores of rupees, and then let them loose as so many predatory animals to prey upon their victims, be they sick patients or other needy sections looking for competent and dedicated professionals.

Government has been the principal offender in both debasing and expanding unthinkingly a wasteful and unproductive system. All government jobs are degree-oriented. The result is a hectic scramble for collecting bits of parchment at any cost and by any means, by hook or by crook—preferably by crook—as is evident from mass copying in the examinations. Once jobs are properly classified on the basis of the skills needed for their competent performance, they can and should be delinked from degrees. The myth of degrees has long been exploded but old habits persist. The Prime Minister has stressed the need for vocational training for youth. Provided adequate facilities and job opportunities are forthcoming, the students will need no great coaxing to go in for such institutions. But when the growth rate is slow and the authorities have no clear idea about the exploitation of skilled manpower, disappointment is inevitable. Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, the principal architect of modern India, once assured the student community that no engineer would remain unabsorbed in this country. Due to faulty planning and inefficient training the country was faced, in a matter of years, with a glut of engineers. Then it became clear that what was needed was more overseers and more skilled and semi-skilled mechanics.

So far as the run-of-the-mill B.A.s and M.A.s are concerned, and that goes for B.Sc.s, M.Sc.s and Ph.D.s too, their Mecca is the I.A.S., I.P.S., I.F.S. and other prestigious services. Reportedly, this is where power is, along with plenty of pelf to be collected both legally and illegally. For one degree-holder who hits the bull's eye in the services, at least 5,000, if not more, are in the category of "also ran". They are so frustrated and so bitter that the majority of them are either complete misfits in any humbler assignment they are lucky to get or they become drug addicts or cheer leaders of professional politicians, ever on the prowl to exploit the angry militant youth along with plain hoodlums and other anti-social elements.

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Conditions are never just right. People who delay action until all factors are favourable are the kind who do nothing.
— WILLIAM FEATHER.

TUESDAY : AUGUST 2 1983.

THE PIONEER

Wolf pack in Sri Lanka

NOT leonine but wolfish violence has been let loose in Sri Lanka to decimate and finally destroy an ethnic minority comprising more than 12 per cent of the entire population. Full details of the savagery and the mass killing perpetrated both by the troops and anti-Tamil Sinhalese who have run amuck are yet to be ascertained. Official figures put the casualties at 200 killed but knowledgeable sources quote the figure at 2,000 or more. The number of persons maimed and injured runs into thousands while the loss of property of the Tamilians settled in Sri Lanka is estimated at hundreds, if not thousands, of crores of rupees. More than a million uprooted Tamilians are fleeing north to the Jaffna region which is reportedly a Tamil stronghold. No relief is in sight for President Jayewardene is reported to have made the bland admission that the troops had gone completely out of control and run berserk.

To what extent the Sinhalese press has launched a full-throated and wholly perverse hate-India campaign at the prompting of the authorities is anybody's guess. But indications are that the hardliners in the policy-making reaches in Sri Lanka have winked at the excesses committed by the bloodthirsty troops, if not actively connived with them. India with Indira Gandhi as chairperson of the non-aligned movement has been placed in a very embarrassing position. Reportedly the present turmoil erupted in the wake of the killing of thirteen Sinhalese soldiers by a band of guerilla secessionists. India grappling with the problem of ethnic minorities in the homeland cannot countenance secession in any form in Sri Lanka by an ethnic minority of Indian origin. At the same time, she cannot remain an idle spectator to the brutalities and the inhuman conduct to which millions of Indians settled in Sri Lanka for generations are being subjected by a cruel and heartless government.

It has been repeatedly made clear that it is not India's intention to transform the current Tamil agitation into an Indo-Sri Lankan issue to internationalise what is essentially a domestic problem. But India cannot afford to shut its eyes altogether and pretend that it is not in any way concerned with what is happening in the tortured land although India does not approve of the separatist movement. Admittedly, the days of gunboat diplomacy are long past, and, in any case, Indira Gandhi cannot, unlike her

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Name: Satyajit Ray

Age: 60 Years

Appearance: Aristocratic

ence, Ray had all faded from the mind since his Cannes debut "Pathar Panchali". The French have decided that the end of "The Mas-

RY GEORGE

French cinema- now all about a French cri- at the Ray they las, not Satya- nias Ray, the- ized ar- cul by- of

at Cannes in 1956. It may be remembered that Satyajit Ray received the prize for *Pathar Panchali* in absentia.

In France, since then, Ray has all but faded from the public mind, although the two most well-known critics of the fifties, Georges Sadoul and Andre Bazin (an incongruous pair for Sadoul was a devout Communist and Andre Bazin an equally devout Catholic) continued to champion him. But if the critics and the public listened to them, they listened perfunctorily. In France Ray's films became that sad paradox, unviewed classics, cinema's equivalent of literature's unread classics. However, Satyajit Ray on a recent visit to France, shrugged off this indifference, telling French film critics that they shouldn't be too hard on themselves or the public, because French distributors had

sometimes written to Calcutta, but had received no replies to their enquiries. Could it have been that the letters were in French, thus thoroughly confusing the recipients? An intriguing thought. But of such stuff is film history.

However, the French seemed to have finally decided that too years of neglect of 'le maître' (or 'the master' as the critics invariably refer to him) must end. In January 1981, the French television showed a short film but recently completed by Ray, the beautifully crafted *Pikku*. Significantly, *Pikku* was financed by a French admirer of Ray's, Henri Fraise. A leading French publisher, Hachette, will soon be bringing out a French translation of Ray's collection of essays, *Our Films, Their Films*. A further book is planned by an academic, Henri Micciolo.

Meanwhile, four cinema houses

in Paris, including one in the Champs Elysees, are showing Ray's *Jalsaghar* (*Le Salon de Musique* is the French title). The reviews of the film have stopped only this side of idolatry. However, one did notice that the French subtitles of the film spell Tarashankar Banerjee's name wrong in the credits and *La Croix*, a leading French daily, even got the spelling of Satyajit Ray's name wrong. Alas, as Oscar Wilde remarked, fame is when the newspapers start spelling your name correctly. Another review of *Jalsaghar* published in a leading French daily confidently identified the Kathak dance, one of the high points of the film, as a Kathakali dance. Kathak, Kathakali, the difference seems slight to the French ear.

But such solecisms apart, the critics have unhesitatingly accord-

out for censorship and worse. In their patriotic stew they forget that one can kill a bad idea only with a better one. In other words, the answer to Louis Malle may not be the censor's scissors but the magic of Satyajit Ray.



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A Visit To China

I—How The System Works

By J.S. UPPAL

EVER since I published the book *India-China Development Contrasts* in 1970, I was rather anxious to visit China to see myself how the economic system in China works. My interest was further heightened by studying the literature on India-China comparisons, appearing in the USA and other western countries during the seventies, asserting that while China had achieved substantial progress in social and economic spheres, India had miserably failed. Some writers advised India to learn from the Chinese development model to improve the deteriorating Indian economy. I got an opportunity to visit the People's Republic of China during January 1983 on invitations from the two major Chinese universities: the Nanjing University, Nanjing and the Fudan University, Shanghai to lecture on the problems and patterns of economic planning in the south Asian countries.

A Pleasant Surprise

With all the excitement, I and my wife left India on January 4, 1983 and during the flight I was imagining what surprises would I find in that most populous country in the world. As an old Russian built Soyuz aeroplane, carrying mostly overseas Chinese and a few Europeans, landed at the Shanghai international airport at 11, I got a big surprise—a cultural shock—to see rather an empty airport with very few persons, a small number of airport personnel and a few officials who came to receive the incoming official guests, besides the arriving passengers. I was comparing the Shanghai airport with the New Delhi and Bombay airport in India, where hundreds of passengers, their friends and relatives, porters and others, crowd every space inside and taxi drivers and others waiting outside. Shanghai is China's most populous city and in fact it may be one of the world's five largest cities.

Later on inquiring from our hosts and with similar experiences at railroad stations and bus depots, we found out that Chinese do not travel unnecessarily for various reasons. With almost every body at work, it is difficult to get leave to travel, or see off or receive guests except when absolutely necessary. Nobody has the time or is even allowed to loiter around aimlessly in public places such as railways and bus stations and airports. In the evening at about 6, we flew into Nanjing from Shanghai in a small old Russian-built aircraft—full of rather serious-looking adult males who seemed like government officials. There were amazingly no families travelling.

As we drove in a university car on the main wide roads of Nanjing, one of the major Chinese cities, it was a pleasant surprise to see orderly flowing traffic with thousands of bicycles driven by men and women, old and young, dressed in blue jackets and pants, with a blue cap (it was quite cold, about 7 Celsius) on two sides of the road with middle path reserved for the public buses. There were very few cars and hardly any motor or scooters. No noise from horns and no traffic jams.

I learnt, later on, that in China, use of private cars is banned. Cars are used

only by government agencies for certain designated officials and for guests (like us). As regards scooters, firstly, they are priced very high and secondly, and more importantly, the fuel allowed for scooters is very meagre and also priced too high to make it worthwhile to drive. I was very impressed by this widespread use of bicycles. It saves scarce and expensive gasoline, builds muscles for cycle riders, saves cities from pollution, and also makes traffic flow smoothly without traffic jams and avoids clogging from parked cars. In addition, it provides jobs in labour intensive small scale industries manufacturing bicycle parts located in the rural sector.

We were housed in a comfortable room in a special building reserved for "foreign experts and guests," and we were shown a rather spacious dining room where we would eat all our meals. This dining room was again reserved exclusively for foreigners (there were about 150 foreign students and visiting specialists from abroad). I later learnt that foreigners, including foreign students, are kept "at a distance" from the local residents. Several foreign students told me that they have had very little social interaction with Chinese students and staff, unlike in India, the USA and some other countries where social interaction with foreign students is rather encouraged for promoting cross cultural understanding.

When we went for shopping, we discovered that there are exclusive stores, "friendship stores," for foreigners, who are given different type of money (different from local population uses) in exchange for their foreign money. These friendship stores, selling imported goods and artistic Chinese handicrafts, where the Chinese are not allowed to shop, accept on special currency. It may seem like discrimination against the local population (remember the exclusive clubs and stores for foreigners in several colonies, including India, before independence), but by doing so, the Chinese government achieves several purposes.

Price Discrimination

First, it enhances foreign exchange earning, and also prevents blackmarket in foreign currencies. Secondly, the domestic market is protected by not allowing the local population to buy foreign goods. Above all, we were so told, that by isolating the local population from foreigners, Chinese are saved from "the demonstration effect," "revolution of rising expectations," and craze for foreign goods—causes of mounting frustrations in many third world countries.

A survey of prices in the market indicated that there are three layers of price in China. Luxuries like TVs, tape recorders, fashion goods, liquor, are priced high. Comforts, such as sugar, textiles, bicycles, shoes, fruits are priced moderately, while the necessities: coarse clothes, rice, salt, medicines, seasonal vegetables, house rent, electric and water charges and footwear are kept amazingly low. The rationale given for this price discrimination is obvious to bring mass consumption goods within the reach of everybody, while at the same time, to make available sufficient quantities of comfort and luxury goods

for sale in the market, as an inducement to households to work harder to buy them. We did not see any shortage of goods in the market. In fact, the department stores in big, as well as small cities and towns were well stocked with all types of comfort and luxury goods.

A few days after arrival at Nanjing, I started lecturing at the Nanjing University to students and faculty from different social sciences departments. There was orderliness at the campus, students looked busy in attending their classes, or studying in libraries. No loitering around or aimless wandering on the campus. We were told that it is considered a great privilege to be selected in a university after high school based on high scholastic attainments in difficult and competitive examinations. The students are fully funded for education on the condition of maintaining high scholastic standards and "good behavior". In the circumstances any activity not consistent with the educational purposes will make a student lose the great opportunity of education.

Curriculum

I studied the curriculum for the B.A. and M.A. in economics. There was very little emphasis on economic theory. Most of the curriculum related to the structure of the Chinese economy, Marxian economics, economic histories of Russia, England, Japan and China. I was told that there are few universities which are specially designated to provide training in abstract economic theory including model building. I looked into the salaries of the university faculty. There are four faculty ranks: professor's associate professors, lecturers and assistant lecturers. A professor's (only two out of 30 faculty members in the economics department) monthly salary is about Y-280 (Y-1-US dollar 0.50). The four associate professors, 15 lecturers and 10 assistant lecturers earned Y-80 and Y-58 each respectively. They are also given bonuses varying from 10 to 20 per cent of their salary, depending on productivity and "good behaviour". The range of salaries in the university was 1-5. We will say more about the income levels in other occupations, prices and living standards later.

The Nanjing University, Nanjing and later the Fudan University at Shanghai made arrangements, at my request, for our visits to factories in cities (manufacturing radios, TVs, machine tools, weaving rugs and carpets, jade and ivory products) and rural and semi-rural communes close to big cities (within 30 km), and far off cities (80-100 km) from urban centres. During all these visits an interpreter accompanied us in a university vehicle. Let me, at this point, answer a question which is often raised. Were we taken wherever the Chinese government wanted us to go? Could we move freely ourselves to observe the socio-economic condition. The answer to the first is in affirmative. For the second question: the answer is yes and no, because we did walk around in the cities of Nanjing and Shanghai on our own, but one needs a local interpreter (which can only be provided through the government) to converse meaningfully with the people.

(To Be Continued)

Dr J.S. Uppal is a professor of economics, State University of New York.

MARKS ALLOTTED TO EACH QUESTION

Fold Here

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Friendship stores in Chinese cities are, for the most part, set aside for foreigners to buy Chinese and imported goods—paid for the Chinese P.E.C.s (foreign exchange certificates) different from the local currency. Both are historic cities, but with the heavy stamp of officialdom only in the State Museum. Hazratganj, Lucknow

II—A Visit To China

Digitized by eGangotri Foundation, however, we felt free to see anything of interest to anybody (through an interpreter, of course) in factories, farms, hospitals, educational institutions and stores. During our travels in buses, cars, trains and walks, we could, of course, see the countryside, sanitary conditions, and read people's faces and get an idea of their social and economic condition. The factories we visited were clean, workers looked enthusiastically busy, the cafeterias well maintained. We were told that the minimum earnings of a worker was 40 yuans plus 10-20 per cent bonus. The highest wage (salary of the manager) was Y-280 p.m. (ratio of 1-7). The actual salary of an industrial worker is dependent on his output beyond the assigned or expected output (based on average productivity).

Typical Feature

We were told that a typical worker earns about Y-55 per month. With both husband and wife working, the household income would come to about Y-110 per month, which, we were told, is sufficient to pay rent (Y-2-3 per month), electricity (Y-1 per month), and buying necessities and some comforts. A family has to save, and/or work harder to buy luxuries. Every factory is a multi-purpose and self-contained unit in the sense that it provides various labour welfare services including a nursery school, where female workers leave their infant children at a minimal fee of Y-1 per year, cafeterias for workers, where a worker can buy hot meals at cheap subsidised prices. Each factory has an allotment of residential flats, which it assigns to workers according to their needs (e.g., family members) and income level. We were told that every household family with one child is assured at least 2 rooms (living and cooking) with shared bathroom and lavatories.

The working conditions within factories were rather pleasant, no foul smell, soft music playing in the background, with provision of adequate sanitary facilities and other conveniences for the workers. The pattern of employment and wage structure for other enterprises, e.g. stores, sanitation workers, teachers, clerks—all employed by the state—seems to be similar to the factories as mentioned above. The range in salaries: 1-7 seems to be a typical feature in China. The 10 to 15 per cent bonus, which as mentioned earlier, is determined by productivity, attitudes and behaviour of the workers. The bonus system plays an important role in keeping workers in line and making them follow the government's guidelines, communicated to them as a part of "political education" given in all enterprises. The observance of government guidelines would, for example, include following the "one child per family" norm. Non-observance of the guidelines would mean forfeiting of bonus in addition to admonishment and punishment, depending on the seriousness of the situation.

We were told that the government allocates workers to different jobs according to various factors such as their educational training and aptitudes. It must be a mammoth task indeed and we wonder to what extent "connections" with political bosses matter in getting assigned to comparatively more attractive jobs and at the preferred locations. Also, we could not find how easy or difficult, the vertical and horizontal mobility, would be in the Chinese society. In the urban areas, one finds some self-employed workers e.g., repairmen, shoe repair, small vegetable and fruit stalls and of course, "free markets" in which one sees vendors selling all kinds of merchandise: clothes, toys, vegetables, fruits, eggs, tools, furniture.

This "self-employment" is a recent post-Mao phenomenon, we were told. The government is increasingly realising that as it cannot provide jobs to everybody, self-employment has to be encouraged through providing loans, work sites and necessary training. Talking to some self-employed persons, we learnt that their net earnings come to approximately Y-55 per month. In order

by the government so that free markets do not undermine the government stores.

We were curious to see a rural commune through which China has tried to transform its backward agriculture. We spent a lot of time in three rural communes in Nanjing and Shanghai, besides brief visits to two semi-industrial communes. We were told that China is not abandoning the commune system as a part of the post-Mao economic changes, as reported outside China. The commune system is, however, changing its major rule: farm production through production teams and production brigades to "coordination" of various enterprises in the commune including farming by individual households on the basis of "individual responsibility system". We were told, during our interviews with commune administrators and also farm families that under the new system, each household is allocated land, approximately 2.5 acres, for a family with three working members, (the allocation is made on the basis of several factors such as type of soil, irrigation facilities, availability of supplementary jobs outside agriculture, in addition to a small "private plot." The households grow crops as advised by the commune according to its overall production plan to fit in with the provincial and national plans. The households buy agricultural inputs, fertilisers, seeds, and may rent agricultural machines if needed, from the commune.

The output from the land so assigned should not be less than the "production norm" determined by the commune on the basis of average output and modified by the seasonal and weather conditions, etc. Eighty per cent of the output according to the norm is required to be sold at fixed prices to the commune, the remaining 20 per cent plus the output from the private plots can be kept by the households for self consumption and/or for sale at prices higher than the "fixed price." In order to earn more income, the households try to produce more than the "norm" on their allotted land and also on the private plots. The system, thus ensures the commune agricultural output at least according to the "production norm" and provides incentive to peasant households to produce more to earn additional income.

This new system combines the advantages of "collective and co-operative agriculture" with the "incentives" built in the individual ownership. The Chinese experts maintain that this new system will avoid the debacle in output which occurred during the "cultural revolution" for the lack of incentive system. We were told by farm families, as well as the commune officials, that the farm incomes are generally higher than non-farm incomes in urban areas and this is encouraged as a national policy to prevent rural migration to urban areas in search of higher paying jobs: a serious problem in underdeveloped countries. We found every farm family provided with some shelter, water and sanitation facilities. People, especially children, were adequately clothed and seemed well fed and healthy. We were specially impressed by the medical and educational facilities for the rural population. The hospitals dealing with major medical problems were well staffed and with adequate supplies of medicines and medical equipment. There were "bare foot" doctors for minor illnesses.

New System

In every commune, there was at least one "departmental store" carrying all types of items, including luxuries and comforts on the same pattern as in the cities. We were told that entertainment teams including mobile "cinemas" and dance and music teams regularly visit rural communes. The underlying strategy followed is to gradually provide rural areas with more or less the same amenities as available in the urban areas so that the rural people are no more attracted to urban areas. The rural communes also organise small scale, labour intensive industries to provide work to farm families during the off-agricultural season. During the off-season we found farm families engaged in manufacturing

to keep a balance between the wages in "enterprises employment" and "self-employed" workers, there is a special tax on the latter's earnings. The prices in the free markets are watched carefully (To be concluded)

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China Sweet And Sour

II—Coping With The New Values

By A.S. ABRAHAM

THE prizes in the Shanghai Journalists' Association's annual ping-pong competition had been given away, the chief guest and the officials accompanying him had left, and the 200-odd, mostly young, people who had stayed behind had taken to the floor. Couples, mainly a man and a woman but sometimes two men or two women, foxtrotted, waltzed, jived, twisted, shook and rattled with flushed enthusiasm. Breakdancing did not appear to have yet arrived. The style was practical rather than expert, as if the step had been learnt scrupulously and were being carried out with special care not to put a foot wrong. The band, a professional, flashily dressed group, played ear-splittingly loudly.

It could have been young people anywhere, but what gave it away as Chinese was the choice of music. It ranged from Scott Joplin rags, oldies like "Jumbalaya", Stevie Wonder's "I just called to say I love you", "Silent night", Japanese laments, Chinese sentimental songs, even a skilful, operatic rendition of the famous drinking-song duet, *brindisi*, from Verdi's *la traviata* by a young Chinese tenor and soprano with evidently well-trained voices. Where else but in Dengist, open-door China would you get such a bewildering *melange* at a young people's dance?

The evening said something about the cultural dimensions of China's open-door policy (ODP). After having been hermetically sealed off from the modern world for nearly three decades, to keep out what was consistently reviled as "imperialist-bourgeois decadence", the gates have been swung wide open and those same emanations allowed not merely to waft over but to smother the middle kingdom. The Chinese do not quite know how to take it. On the one hand, they are being told, again and again, that contact with the outside world is necessary and good. Their as yet limited but rapidly growing experience of it has made them like what they have tasted. They want more, yet they are not sure how it will change them, how to cope with the values that inhere in what they so avidly seek.

Bewildering Melange

A good illustration of this equivocal attitude is service — in big stores, small shops, restaurants, airport, hotels. Tipping is banned in China and wages, like jobs, are guaranteed. So no one really bothers to try too hard to please a customer. Having just arrived at Beijing airport and been taken straight to lunch at the restaurant, with a wholly Chinese clientele eating ordinary Chinese food, we sat around for a good half-hour before a waitress deigned to take our order. If my Chinese escort was exasperated, he did not show it, though he did say that service was usually slow in China.

However, the new, "four-modernisations" ethic that is being so assiduously disseminated requires not just a willingness but even an eagerness to please. This is especially so in dealing with foreigners, particularly Americans and other westerners for whom the Chinese, like other third-world people, reserve a special deference. "Friendship stores" in Chinese cities are, for the most part, set aside for foreigners to buy imported goods, paid for by Chinese FECs (foreign exchange certificates) differ-

ferent, sometimes sullen and, if the buyer is too finicky about choice, can even be peremptorily withdrawn. Counters seem hopelessly understaffed, with one employee having to attend to up to 20 customers at a time. But inquiries revealed that, in fact, more staff are on the payroll but take it in turn at the counter to ensure minimal works, service.

What seems to underlie such reluctance, even resistance, to sell is not just secure wages and the lack of incentives to boost sales. It springs from what might be called a cultural time-warp. The Chinese have for so long not had anything like choice in terms of goods on offer that the quite sudden appearance of a range of options, and of buyers wanting to see what is available before deciding, makes them confused.

New Ethics

If there is any region eminently predisposed to adapting the new modernist-consumerist ethic without too much difficulty, it is the East Coast from Shanghai, roughly at the centre of the eastern seaboard, down through Guangzhou (formerly Canton) to the four special economic zones (SEZs), not less than three of which are sited, not for nothing, in Guangdong province, of which Guangzhou is the capital. The whole area swings between, at its northern end, the once considerably but now residually westernised city of Shanghai and, at its southern tip, the booming showpiece of western-style capitalism, Hong Kong, due to become part of China in just over a decade. Guangzhou, in between them but nearer Hong Kong than Shanghai is, exhibits more of the modern-style entrepreneurship of Hong Kong than does Shanghai whose bustle has an old-world, tattered air about it. The further south you go, the more pronounced Chinese open-door modernism becomes.

In spirit, however, if no longer in style and gloss, it is Shanghai that betokens at once the mercantilism that made it so notoriously prosperous for a century until the 1949 communist revolution stripped it of its seductive exterior and the new-style dynamism that the Dengists want to entrench everywhere. Whatever the Chinese may say about developing the country evenly, the leadership sees the eastern seaboard, with 15 cities and especially from Shanghai downwards, as both motive-force and model of the values of energetic enterprise and initiative on which it has deliberately set so high a social premium. It is here that the ODP will be expected to bring China to the economic launching-pad from where the ascent into superstellar wealth and power will be made. The four SEZs, the huge industrial magnets of Shanghai and Guangzhou as well as the milk-and-honey provinces they command and, in 11 years, Hong Kong, will together comprise the Chinese economic powerhouse, an eloquent demonstration of the correctness of the ODP and a living refutation of its critics' reservations.

Shanghai is to China what Bombay is to India, even as, to carry the analogy further, Beijing and New Delhi are alike in appearance and spirit. Both capitals are to unconvincingly spacious and uncongested. Both are historic cities, but with the modernism only too ubiquitously visible in Shanghai, on the other hand,

bearing the marks of the rampant commercialism it once thrived on and which more than anything else makes Bombay tick today. Both are westernised not only in that the older sections look to much like the 19th-century northern British cities on which those parts were modelled (down to conspicuous clock-towers atop squat, stone buildings), but also in the degree to which their residents appear to have internalised western-style individualism.

Inevitably, it was in Shanghai that we were approached by black-market money-changers. The waterfront there, as in coastal cities round the world, is still the hub of much underworld activity — remember what to "shanghai" someone means? — and courting couples can be seen entwined on benches with a passion more usually associated with colder, western climes. During the day, there is frenetic activity on crowded pavements, as traffic on the roads whizzes past, with drivers and the omnipresent cyclist more often than not at cross-purposes. People are dressed more stylishly, the women better groomed, the shops more attractively done up, the advertisements more plentiful and more beckoning.

Whatever its post-1949 experience, Shanghai is bouncing back with a vengeance. The ODP would seem specially tailored for to. In turn, it has never totally repudiated the pre-revolutionary values it was forced, in the Maoist years, to be shamefaced about, but which are now being held up as a model for the whole country. This gives it an edge on most other regions and cities (Guangzhou is one obvious exception, given its proximity to Hong Kong). So, ironically, it is the same Shanghai, once defensive about its pre-1949 ambience, that is now excellently placed, because of that very ambience, to take to Dengist modernism and ODP enterprise.

Westernised Ethos

The westernised ethos that makes Shanghai, Guangzhou and other places on the south-southeastern coast more congenial to the ODP ethic does not, however, weaken the cultural ambivalence and confusion that the wholesale propagation by the state of the new value-system is causing throughout China. On the contrary, it is deepening it. Those values were from 1949 to 1978, the object of derision and those held guilty of harbouring them, however residually, were the butt of contumely. It may now be an advantage for a place to rediscover its westernised, individualistic orientation, but what is the cultural cost in personal and public terms of changing tack, first this way, then that, within four decades and with no certainty of what further cultural baggage may have to be discarded, acquired or retained, depending on whether Dengism survives and, if it does, in what form?

Then again, the individualism, entrepreneurial talent and autonomous decision-making that are at the heart of the ODP still have to operate within a tightly state-controlled framework that grants no significant political or personal freedoms. Can such apparent irreconcilables be reconciled, and will they be? The Chinese at any rate are convinced that they are compatible and that they will demonstrate this in the years ahead.

But until then, the

MARKS ALLOTTED TO EACH QUESTION

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to keep a balance between the "enterprises employment" and "self-employed" workers, there is a special on the latter's earnings. The prices in the free markets are watched carefully (To Be Concluded)

China Sweet And Sour

III—The Importance Of Hong Kong

By A.S. ABRAHAM

FROM the peak, as Hong Kong's classy residential area, a much plusher version of Bombay's Malabar hill, is called, you can get a spectacular view of the numerous islands scattered around the south China sea. Hong Kong looks small and vulnerable, a dot in a far-flung archipelago. From up there a Hong Kong resident, aware of how his city is economically "head and shoulders above others in the south-east Asian region", as the *China People's Daily* put it, might feel as chastened, as rudely cut down to size, as mediaeval scholastics must have been when the Copernican revolution told them that the earth was not the centre of the universe, but only one of many heavenly bodies that the sun held in thrall. The cluster of islands belongs, for the most part, to China. Until not so long ago, that did not matter; Hong Kong was allowed to beaver away creating wealth, undisturbed by the giant next door. But now, the giant has claimed what always belonged to him. Hong Kong will no longer be the sun at the centre of the local universe; China is the sun round which Hong Kong will orbit.

Catalytic Role

The value China places on Hong Kong, the catalytic role Beijing has assigned it in the country's modernisation, can be gauged by comparing Chinese attitudes to Hong Kong and Portuguese-held Macao next door. Poor little Macao! The Portuguese have offered it back to the Chinese not once but twice (or is it thrice?), but the Chinese have said "What's the hurry? Keep it a while longer". And no wonder! For there is little to Macao beyond its five casinos (in six square miles), where spillover tourists from Hong Kong blow (or add to) their money, its pimps, bordellos and such other jawdri entertainment as it can offer those with unjaded appetites. It is a sad place. The tawdriness is overwhelming, from the decaying, though sometimes well-designed, buildings, through the narrow, congested alleys fronted by pretentiously smart shops that do not quite cover the squalor behind them, to the haphazard mixture of street cultures and styles. Macao prides itself on being a pale adjunct of vigorous Hong Kong, a barnacle clinging for existence to the underside of a more stately liner that is itself about to lose itself in much larger and more turbulent Chinese waters.

Hong Kong, as the Chinese have always known, is something else altogether. When they made it plain that they would take it back from the British once the present lease ran out in 1997, the British cunningly offered sovereignty so long as they could continue to provide the administration. Now, said the Chinese, sovereignty and administration will both be ours. That is how it is going to be. As a concession of sorts, the Chinese have undertaken to make Hong Kong a "special administrative region" (SAR) for which a basic law, or mini-constitution, is being drafted. This will spell out China's policies in Hong Kong for 50 years during which period the principle of "one country, two systems" will operate, allowing Hong Kong to go on for that time in the way it has done so far.

It is a concession of sorts because, while it is partly that, China itself has every reason to keep Hong Kong ticking prosperously away. Not only does Hong Kong give China a third or more of the latter's foreign exchange, but the territory is clearly intended to be the main conduit for

modern, technological development in China, first along the entire coastal region and spreading from there across the hinterland. That is why the Chinese are pumping capital into Hong Kong. The China International Trust and Investment Corporation (Hong Kong) Ltd. (CITIC) recently paid \$300 million for 95 per cent of the shares of a Hong Kong bank to save it from bankruptcy, is helping to fund a second cross-harbour tunnel and last year offered bonds of \$300 million.

The four special economic zones (SEZ) in China make sense only in the context of Chinese plans for Hong Kong. Ironically, the triumph of Dengism sounded Hong Kong's death-knell as an enormously successful capitalist enclave marrying western entrepreneurial expertise to Chinese energy, skill, thrift and adaptability. Unlike Maoism, which saw Hong Kong as a decadently mercantile Sodom and Gomorrah, Dengism wants to re-make China in Hong Kong's image—after a fusion. While it professes to frown on capitalist modes of ownership and organisation, it eagerly seeks to unleash the private initiative that it knows is a major factor in Hong Kong's dazzling affluence. What better way to effect this release of individual energy than by reassuming control of Hong Kong and making it the role-model of the new modernism?

Hong Kong is a readymade SEZ, one that outstrips all those China hopes to build, and the Chinese mean eventually to integrate it into one massive, throbbing, industrial region down the coast, taking in 15 cities (16, counting Hong Kong), with Shanghai also given a vital, if secondary, role. China's main representative in Hong Kong, the head of the local branch of the Xinhua news agency, told Hong Kong delegates to the National People's Congress in Beijing: "It is impossible for Shanghai to have the conditions with relation to information, communications and personnel, to replace Hong Kong... nor can southeast Asian countries replace Hong Kong because Hong Kong is situated near the Chinese mainland."

Dazzling Affluence

In the meanwhile, the Chinese are concentrating on the SEZs, described by Mr Zhu Yi-Ning, the vice-secretary-general of the provincial people's government of Guangdong, as "windows through which the Chinese people can look out on the world and through which the world can look into China". Shenzhen, the largest of them, has all the marks of a boom town, transformed in six years from a two-square-mile rural township with some 30,000 people into a bustling, 46-square-mile city of over 400,000 residents. Six years ago, its gross annual industrial and agricultural output was 100 million RMB; today, it is nearly three billion. Over 9,000 commercial, industrial and tourist enterprises have been sited there. The skyline is a battery of construction object for as far as the eye can see; the few remaining fishermen's villages are being rapidly cleared to make way for high-rises, factories and plants. Offshore oil drilling has attracted Exxon, Caltex and ESSO, toy-making is considered good business, and a Disneyland, complete with roller-coaster and an artificial ocean (press a button and mock-waves roll onto a pseudo-beach), attracts elated young Chinese men with still-shy girlfriends in (as yet) one-piece swimsuits. Through its courting of foreign capital, in the way it has

clone of Hong Kong. For better or worse, the Dengists have set their hearts on modernisation. Hong Kong-style. And once Hong Kong is properly theirs, they are convinced their task will be so much easier.

That, however, is small comfort to many, if not most, of Hong Kong's residents who are extremely, if mainly privately, apprehensive of the shape the post-1997 order will take. Perhaps the most panic-stricken are the 11,000-odd non-Chinese including those of Indian origin. Diplomatic sources reveal how Hong Kong Indians, trying desperately to win full-fledged British citizenship, petitioned the Queen of England in nauseatingly obsequious terms, reminding her of their and their families' exemplary services to the Crown before and since Indian independence, to no avail. Confident of receiving the Indian citizenship they make no bones about accepting only as a last resort, they are setting about rearranging their affairs, transferring their assets to mainly western countries and ensuring that their children are able to make a future outside Hong Kong and, preferably, outside India.

Foreign Capital

But they, like other Hong Kong residents suddenly fearful of the future, are more to be pitied than censured. Those in the know will tell you that almost everyone who can emigrate or transfer money abroad, or both, is doing or has done so. How big the exodus is and how large the sums going out are no one can, or will, say, but that both are happening is reported as fact, not speculation. The most favoured foreign spots for investing assets and property are said to include Australia, Vancouver, California, London and New York. Paradoxically, Hong Kong's stockmarket is unprecedentedly bullish. Rents, too, are higher than ever, with real estate prices only somewhat behind. The paradox is explained by Hong Kong being traditionally geared to making quick, big, but short-term, profits. So, at least until the early nineties, there is money to be made, and many are making it.

Not more than a minority of Hong Kong's residents are in the rich or super-rich category and so able to make foreign provision for themselves and their families. Most will have no choice but to lump it after 1997. History has taken a bitterly ironic turn for them. When the communists took power in China in 1949, Hong Kong had some half-a-million people; today, there are about 5 million, mainly as a result of successive refugee waves from China. Having fled a communist regime to make a new life, they and their children now face the prospect of living again under communism.

Their only hope rests in China sticking in letter and spirit to its 50-year-long, "one country, two systems" undertaking, and in Dengist China making such a success of its modernising experiment as to permit greater liberalisation within China, and especially for Hong Kong, than has yet been seen in that country. The people of Hong Kong have, willy-nilly, as a big stake in the success of Dengism as the reformers themselves. That should be no small advantage in bringing about Hong Kong's reintegration into the Chinese system in a manner that allows Hong Kong's adaptable people to thrive under Chinese controlled, open-door enterprise even as they have done so far under British capitalist stewardship.

SIDE

Digitized by Sarayu Foundation, New Delhi and Gangotri. Funding: IKS

is common practice to join the government for a specific period. Prof. Stephen Philip Cohen is such a specialist. He is about to complete his two-year stint on the policy planning staff of the State Department before he returns to the University of Illinois. As students of South Asia would know, he is a leading expert on the region. His books on the Indian and Pakistani defence forces are widely recognised as authoritative.

Cohen has recently paid visits to China, Bangladesh and India. While in India, he delivered an address at Allahabad University, excerpts from which follow. In this address he was pains to emphasise that he spoke as a scholar and not as a State Department official.

We take him at his word. But it is only natural that his scholarly presentation should be influenced by his experience at Foggy Bottoms where issues are framed not so much in terms of the reality on the ground as for their policy implications for the United States.

For reasons of space we have excluded the section on India's and Pakistan's nuclear programmes (the text will be published by Allahabad University) which spells out how New Delhi and Islamabad can avoid a nuclear arms race. But this exclusion does not affect the overall presentation. Needless to add, this is an American perspective which is very different from our own which we have spelt out from time to time.

STEPHEN PHILIP COHEN

his book on the Kashmir problem (still the best writing on the subject), Sisir Gupta offered insight that "the major issues in this conflict are those that India and Pakistan created of themselves on the basis of partition."

He noted that the differences between Islamic Pakistan and secular India went beyond the fate of the two countries. The entire span of their relations: indeed how they saw each other and how they saw their relations with the rest of the world.

There is no escaping the fact that the identities of India and Pakistan confront each other. The identity of Pakistan, an Islamic state, seems to challenge the identity of India, a secular state, and harmony between the two remains a distant dream.

These two states merely exist for themselves to cause suspicion in their relations. At Sisir used to argue, the best for India if Pakistan pursues its Gulf and Eastern ties: this would be an obsession with India. The most Indians went unobserved by Pakistan's efforts to reach the west. In an attempt to understand these ties (but not the Muslim population) of course, pursued its Asian strategy.

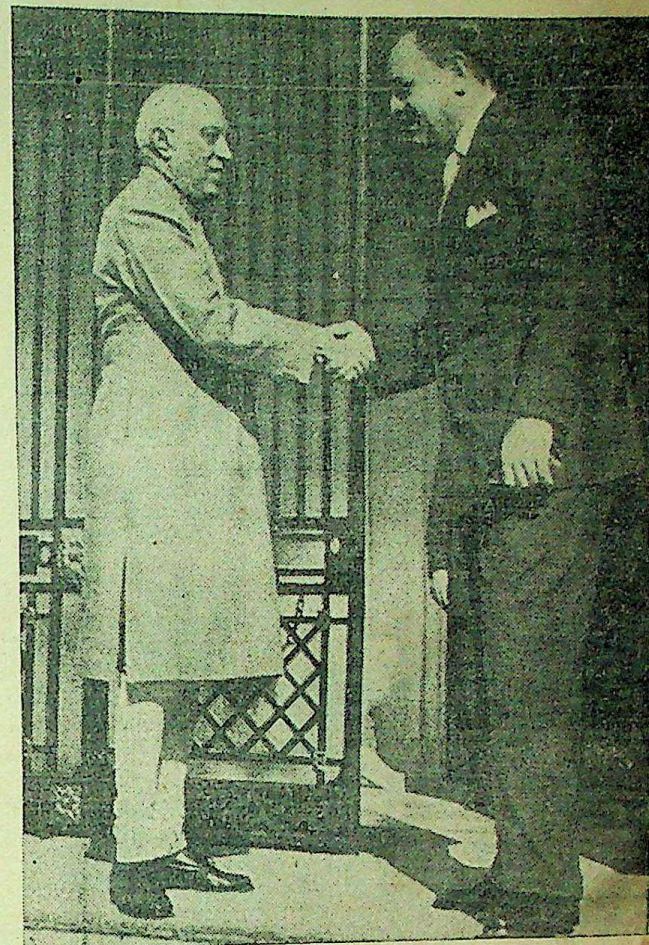
kistan, and elsewhere who argue that because of this fundamental clash of identities, India and Pakistan cannot become friends, that they are doomed to conflict. I disagree on both counts.

First, relations between great states should not be based merely on friendship. Friendship is a rare commodity in international politics. Indeed, as Hans Morgenthau used to say, nations have interests, not friendships. Close and friendly relations evolve out of common interests, and trust develops when two states work to pursue those common interests, especially when they see such interests extending into the distant future. All the rest is propaganda.

Second, nothing is inevitable. Relations between France and Germany, and earlier between France and Britain were once as hostile, as vicious, as filled with hatred as one encounters among the worst India-baiters in Islamabad and Pakistan-haters in Delhi. The fact that this fear and hatred exists is an objective reality and should not be underestimated, but its continuation at very high levels for the indefinite future is not inevitable. Indeed, in the 25 years I have been visiting South Asia I notice a marked change in the kinds of regional passions that stir Indians and Pakistanis.

Let us try to take an objective measure of the state of Indo-Pakistan relations. Let us grant that the very identities of the two states clash, let us also grant that the two states have other conflicting interests, such as the dispute over Kashmir, suspicions about support of ethnic, linguistic or religious minorities, and so forth. What does this add up to?

It means that there will, for the



foreseeable future, be an upper limit to relations between India and Pakistan. It means that we should not use the term "friendship" lightly to describe this relationship. There are ties between you that repel, that create fear and hostility but we should not necessarily assume that these will inevitably lead to war, or that they will prevent cooperation on a whole range of common interests between you.

For, just as there is an upper limit to Indo-Pakistan relations, a ceiling on cooperation, there is also a low limit — a floor — below which relations are unlikely to fall. You and the Pakistanis breathe the same air, drink the same water, share a goodly portion of your cultures, are highly complex, multi-ethnic societies, and historically, experienced the blessings and curses of having been ruled by the British.

India and Pakistan therefore share certain values, ideas, and ideals on how you should manage your internal and external affairs. You also have similar economies, and belong to the non-aligned movement, and thus you both have similar views on how the global political economy should be organised.

In short, while it is easy to stress the inevitability of Indo-Pakistan conflict, a balanced view will note that you and the Pakistanis have an incentive not to let relations between you deteriorate below a certain point. I think that much of this was codified in the Simla summit, and that relations between you and the Pakistanis have, objectively, improved since the early 1970s, despite all that has happened within each country.

There is a floor, and there

is a ceiling: Indo-Pak relations are not merely "better" or "worse", but they oscillate between these boundaries. In my view, the task of statesmanship is to raise upward both the floor and the ceiling.

Since the ceiling is composed, in part, of the images and stereotypes of the past, it can be raised by expanded contacts between you and the Pakistanis. There is much that each of you will dislike in the other, but it is better to function on the basis of a true (even if negative) appreciation of the other side, than on the basis of false images.

YOU can also raise the floor of your relationship by seeking out those economic and strategic interests you have in common with the Pakistanis. The most important of these interests is that you can each damage the other, India, of course, is the region's dominant military power, but in any serious armed clash with Pakistan both would be grievously hurt.

You also share with Pakistan a vital interest in keeping outside powers out of the subcontinent. Ayub Khan made a strategic mistake in downgrading the importance of the Chinese penetration of NEFA in 1962: in 1987 the occupation of a good portion of South Asia by a superpower does not seem to be fully understood in India, nor do you seem to be willing to acknowledge, let alone sympathise with, what Pakistan has done.

I was a supporter of India in the 1971 conflict, but it is now Pakistan that bears the brunt of nearly three million refugees and the military and political harassment of a superpower. Where

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intended to be the focal point of Shenzhen's development.

Raj Narain is dead

NEW DELHI, December 30 (PTI):

MR RAJ NARAIN, the veteran socialist leader died here tonight following a cardiac arrest.

According to doctors attending on him the socialist leader had suffered severe cardiogenic shock and despite best efforts he showed no signs of recovery.

A colourful actor on the Indian political stage for nearly four decades, Raj Narain earned the distinction of being instrumental in changing the course of the country's political history thrice in a brief span of four years.

Always a fighter in his turbulent political leader, Mr Raj Narain's prescience in challenging his defeat by Mrs Indira Gandhi in the Lok Sabha poll in Rae Bareilly

led to the setting aside of her election.

He also played a crucial role in



Raj Narain

reducing the Janata Party to a minority. Mr Raj Narain first

came to prominence during the Quit India Movement when he was arrested and detained.

Born on March 15, 1917, he was actively associated with the freedom movement since his childhood. A law graduate of the Banaras Hindu University he was a close associate of veteran socialists like Acharaya Narendra Dev and Dr Ram Manohar Lohia.

The fighter in him showed the same zeal in battling the Congress governments in post independent India, as he showed against the British during the freedom struggle. He once mentioned that he had been in jails 15 out of 30 years after independence having been imprisoned as many as 58 times.

Continued on Page 12 Col 2

Raj Narain dead

Continued from page 1

After making his mark in the politics of his home state, Uttar Pradesh, he clashed with stalwarts like Govind Ballabh Pant, he made his debut in the Central politics in 1977 when he became a member of Rajya Sabha.

His penchant for making his presence felt in the house in a dramatic manner once led the veteran CPI leader, Mr Bhupesh Gupta to remark that the upper house had been turned into "Raj Narain sabha".

Mr Raj Narain recalled the peak of his political career when he became the health minister in the Janata Party government headed by Mr Morarji Desai. But his fortunes suffered a decline with the collapse of the Janata government.

During the last days of the Janata government, Mr Raj Narain was loyal to Mr Charan Singh who was the home minister in Mr Desai's government. Later he quarrelled with Mr Charan Singh, and set up his own socialist party.

Mr Raj Narain also had a short stint in the cine world when he acted in a film.

Macmillan is dead

LONDON, December 30 (Reuter): 'Supernatural' Harold Macmillan, the prime minister who presided over the peaceful dismantling of Britain's African



Harold Macmillan

empire, died yesterday aged 92, his family said.

The Earl of Stockton, as he became after he accepted a peerage from Queen Elizabeth on his 90th birthday, was Britain's oldest surviving ex-prime minister.

He had been in poor health for some time at his home in Sussex, southern England, following a bout of pneumonia.

A statement issued by his family last night said Macmillan died peacefully at his home, Birch Grove, after a short illness.

Members of his family were with him. The funeral will be held privately in Sussex and he will be buried alongside his wife, Lady Dorothy Macmillan, in the family plot in the churchyard of St. Giles in Horsted Keynes, Sussex.

Macmillan was Conservative prime minister from January 1957 to October 1963, when Britain adjusted to the humiliation of the abortive invasion of Suez in 1946.

Continued on Page 12 Col 1

Macmillan is dead

Continued from page 1

granted independence to more than a dozen nations including Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Malaya, Singapore, and Cyprus, and began to edge towards Europe.

He claimed a place in the history books of decolonisation with a landmark speech to the South African parliament in 1960 in which he said a "wind of change" was blowing through Africa.

At home, Macmillan presided over a post-war economic boom immortalized in the phrase you never had it so good.

This was the popular version of a speech in 1957 when Macmillan, never shy of a good line, said: "Let's be frank about it: most of our people have never had it so good."

But some of the good turned bad and Macmillan was eventually driven from office by ill health in the aftermath of a spy and sex scandal involving his war minister John Profumo.

Shortly before he died, Macmillan faced accusations that he sent Cossacks and Yugoslavs to their deaths after World War II.

Count Nikolai Tolstoy claimed in a book that Macmillan was involved in the forcible repatriation of thousands of refugees who were massacred by the Soviet authorities in 1945 when he was minister resident of the Allied Forces in the Mediterranean.

Macmillan not known to have replied to the charges. But Tolstoy's accusations hardly dented the image of the grand old man of British politics who had kept himself in the limelight in his later years as a distinguished chancellor of Oxford University and an occasional, outspoken critic of prime minister, Margaret Thatcher.

His last major public appearance was at a ceremony in Oxford to confer an honorary degree on Spain's King Juan Carlos.

It was his imperturbable exterior which earned him the nickname 'supernatural'. He fought and was wounded three times in the 1914-19 war and served under Winston Churchill in the 1939-45 war.

The year 1986 at a glance

THE year 1986 witnessed continued terrorist activities in Punjab, eruption of violence in Goa, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu and killing by Tribal National volunteers in Tripura.

While hundreds of people were killed in bus and train accidents, a fire in the Sidhartha hotel in the Capital claimed 38 lives.

Prominent personalities who died during the year included Jagjivan Ram, T. Anjaiah, Atulya Ghosh, Chandrasekhar Singh, Ajoy Mukherjee, Tehzing Norgay, J. Krishnamoorti, Rukmanidevi Arundale, Gen A.S. Vaidya and Smrita Patil.

The following are the important national events during 1986:

JANUARY 6: Eighth conference of Commonwealth speakers and presiding officers begins in New Delhi, 7 The Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, receives, on behalf of Mrs Indira Gandhi, the first national zoological park medal, 10 Socialist leader, Mr Sri Krishna dies in Patna, 10, Filmotsava '86 begins at Hyderabad, 11 The Prime Minister inducts MiG-27 into Indian Air Force, 11 Gujarati poet, Indulal Gandhi, passes away, 12 The prime minister of the South Yemen, Mr Abubaker al-Altas, arrives in Delhi, 13 First South Asian archaeological Congress begins in Delhi, 13 Kartar Singh Thattai, close associate of Veer Savarkar, dies, 14 Former army chief, Mr K.M. Cariappa, made Field Marshal, 15 H.N. Sethna receives Dadabhai Naoroji Award.

FEBRUARY 1: Pope John Paul II arrives in Delhi, 3 Prof. M.G. Menon appointed scientific adviser to the Prime Minister, 5 Shekhar Gupta gets Inlaks foundation journalism award, 7 The Prime Minister arrives in Maldives, 7 The PTPE beatifies Father Kuriakose Elias Chavara and Sister Alphonsa, 10 Meghalaya cabinet ministers submit resignation, 11 Karnataka chief minister, Mr R.K. Hegde, resigns, 12 Prof. Yash Pal appointed UGC chairman, 16 G.S. Tohra resigns as SGPC chief, 16 Hegde is again sworn in as Karnataka chief minister, 17 Noted philosopher, J. Krishnamoorti, passes away, 21 Kanubhai Gandhi, grandson of Gandhiji, dies, 22 Indian embassy in Lima damaged in bombing, 24 Rukmani Devi Arundale, founder of Kalakshetra, dies, 26 Arif Mohammed Khan resigns as Union minister, 26 R.K. Trivedi

32 aircraft reported missing, 27 Maharashtra governor, Kona Prabhakar Rao resigns, 29 Twelve people killed by terrorists in Ludhiana, 29 Twelve killed in Jalandhar.

APRIL: S.S. Ray appointed Punjab governor, 9 Turkish prime minister, Turgut Ozal, arrives in Delhi, 14 Fifty pilgrims killed in a stampede near Hardwar, 16 NAM foreign ministers conference begins in Delhi, 16 RKS Gandhi sworn in as Himachal governor, 18 Atulya Ghosh, prominent Congressman, passes away, 20 Asiatic society selects the late Swedish prime minister, Olof Palme, for the Indira Gandhi gold plaque, 21 V.S. Tripathi, former adviser to Prime Minister, dies, 22 Seychelles president, France Albert Rene, arrives in Delhi, 22 G.B. Kotak, associate of Gandhiji, passes away, 26 Forty four pilgrims killed in a bus mishap near Deoprayag, 26 Pranab Mukherjee is expelled from Congress, 30 Police and para military forces enter Golden Temple complex to flush out terrorists, 30 Chandra Shekhar is elected Janata Party chief.

MAY 2: Two Punjab cabinet ministers resign, 5 Lok Sabha passes the Muslim Women (protection of rights on divorce) Bill, 6 Punjab cabinet expanded, 6 Prime Minister inaugurates SAARC ministerial meeting on women in development, 8 Three dissidents expelled from Akali Dal (L), 9 Ace mountaineer, Tenzing Norgay, passes away, 12 Union cabinet reshuffled, 14 Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, arrives in Zambia, 16 V. Shantaram is selected for the Dada Saheb Phalke award, 18 Dr K.L. Rao, former Union minister, passes away, 22 SWAPO president, Sam Nujoma, arrives in Delhi, 25 Srikanth Verma, MP passes away, 27 Ajoy Mukherjee, former West Bengal chief minister, dies, 28 Assam cabinet expanded, 31 Telugu novelist, T. Nageswara Rao, passes away, 31 Flutist, T.R. Mahalingam, dies.

JUNE 1: Noted agronomist, Jyoti Prasad Bhattacharya, dies, 4 Bansilal to replace Bhajan Lal as Haryana chief minister, 4 Noted Kannada writer, Masti Venkatesh Iyengar, dies, 7 Freedom fighter, Deoki Nandan Pandey, passes away, 10 Venkataramaiah panel submits report, 10 Vice-President, Mr R. Venkataraman, arrives in Paris, 12 Dr Amiya Chakravarty, poet, dies, 14 Prime Minister

people killed in a train collision near Patna, 21 President arrives in Kathmandu, 25 Fifteen bus passengers killed by terrorists in Muktsar in Punjab, 26 Army called as five people are killed in riots in Delhi, 27 Army called out in Kalimpong, 27 Twelve people killed in a train accident in Bilabur division, 28 Yugoslav prime minister, Branka Mikulic, arrives in Delhi.

AUGUST 1: Thirty people killed in a bus accident in Shrinagar, (Garhwal), 4 Uma Shankar Dixit is succeeded by Nurul Hasan as West Bengal governor, 4 Forty people killed in a bus accident near Patna, 4 Prime Minister attends Commonwealth summit, 4 Mr Rajiv Gandhi arrives in Mexico, 6 Fifty two people killed in a train accident near Patna, 8 First general manager of UNI, D.P.S. Wagle, dies, 9 Dr Shankar Prasad Mitra, MP, dies, 9 P.S. Badal and G.S. Tohra arrested, 10 Gen A.S. Vaidya shot dead, 12 Freedom fighter, Paraswarith Ram shot dead, 21 Laldenga ministry sworn in at Mizoram, 22 Noted painter and philosopher, Shobha Singh, dies, 25 A Rs 15-lakh prize instituted in the memory of Indira Gandhi, 29 Kantilal Gandhi, associate of Gandhiji, dies, 30 Noted violinist, V. Sethuramaiah, dies, 30 Fourteen people killed in TNV attack.

SEPTEMBER 3: S.N. Haksar, diplomat, dies, 3 Dr V. Kurien gets Carnegie peace prize, 5 Fifteen passengers in a Pan Am jetliner, which left Bombay, were killed at Karachi, 7 President's rule in Jammu and Kashmir, 8 Nicaragua president, Daniel Ortega, arrives in Delhi, 11 Twenty eight people killed in a bus-train collision in Lakhimpur district of Assam, 15 Five defence personnel killed in a helicopter crash, 15 Prof Jagannath Upadhyaya, Buddhist scholar, dies, 16 Puranchand Gupta, founder of 'Dainik Jagran', dies, 20 Seoul Asian games begin, 21 Maganlal Joshi, former speaker of Saurashtra legislative assembly, dies, 23 Republican party president, Datta Katti, dies, 25 CLP leader, Darshan Singh Canadian, shot dead, 27 CPI(M) leader, Baldev Singh Mann, killed in Punjab.

OCTOBER 1: Extremist links in Durg killings unearthed, 2, PM escapes bid on life at Rajghat in New Delhi, Assailant, Karamjit Singh, arrested, 3 Punjab police

stampede at Ayodhya, industry strike, government stay, 12 Kamalapati, AICC post, 14 Olof Palme given for international, for 1985 posthumous, pass snowstorm, toll, 16 40 drown in boat accident, 16 SAARC summit, concludes with declaration, 24 7 disqualified, 24 Janata Party in by, for 5 Lok Sabha seats, 25, Gorbachev, Delhi, 26 10 shot, 27 India, USSR, declaration, 29 called off.

DECEMBER 1: shot dead in Punjab, High Court, sentence to the, Indira Gandhi, case, 4 Hiteswar, ted governor, mer Hindustan, Shahani, dies, 4, shot dead by TNV, killed in Delhi, N.R. Dhar, renews, passes away, 6, Bhagwan Sahay, people killed in Tamil Nadu, 7, Bangalore riots, merges with Congress, nataka toll rises to, Congressman, V.M. Karunanidhi, Film actress, Smriti, UNI director, dani, passes away, people killed in Pune district, 15, from Orissa, people killed in, dent, 21 Troops, Goa, 22 R.S. office as Chief, the retirement of, 23 Ten DMK, from Tamil Nadu, Eleven killed by, people killed by, 26 Indo-Pak, Islamabad.

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NEW DELHI

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does Hong Kong give China a third swimsuit. Through its courting of controlled, open or more of the latter's foreign foreign capital, in the way it has even as they have done so far and exchange, but the territory is clearly been designed and is being run. British capitalist stewardship intended to be the focal point of Shenzhen's development.

U.S. - Pakistani Lies

Closer Implications For India

By A.S. ABRAHAM

ONLY those who cling to illusions will be taken unawares by the Reagan administration's notification to the U.S. Congress of its decision to modify section 620F of the Foreign Assistance Act to allow Pakistan to be exempted from the application of the Symington Amendment which forbids American arms aid to countries with nuclear facilities that are not covered by International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. The amendment was waived in 1981 for six years to allow Pakistan to receive U.S. military largesse, and that waiver runs out on September 30. Pakistan was uniquely favoured in this respect.

Another law, the Glenn Amendment, which debar the supply of American aid to any country importing or exporting materials, equipment or technology for nuclear reprocessing purposes has also been set aside, in this case indefinitely for Pakistan. Should the U.S. Congress pass the modification of section 620F, the Symington Amendment will be waived around October 1 after when the \$ 4 billion-plus arms and economic assistance that the Reagan administration wants to give Pakistan will start flowing into that country.

Glenn Amendment

According to the U.S. assistant secretary of defence, Mr Richard Armitage, who recently appeared before the U.S. House subcommittee on Asia and Pacific affairs, Pakistan intends to buy new American weapons like early-warning aircraft, replacement fighter-interceptor planes, radars, artillery, counter-battery radar, in addition to upgrading and replacing its obsolescent armour.

Very considerably, the U.S. assistant secretary of state, Mr Richard Murphy, who appeared before the committee on the same day, spoke of the U.S. reamaining "mindful of the need to avoid upsetting what has been an essentially stable military balance on the sub-continent—admittedly in favour of India". Fine words butter no parsnips, and how such assurances square with continuing American military generosity to Pakistan must remain an enigma which only the Reagan administration can crack.

For India, the arming (or massively aided self-arming) of Pakistan to such a conspicuous degree can only mean that India, too, must acquire fresh weaponry if only to ensure that the "essentially stable military balance on the sub-continent" continues to be in its favour.

The increase in defence expenditure envisaged in the latest budget proposals is geared to that end. The budget allocates Rs 12,512 crores for defence, more defence, more than Rs 2,300 crores above the revised estimates for the current financial year for which the initial provision was Rs 8,728 crores. Defence spending will be just over 31 per cent of non-plan expenditure and about a fifth of all expenditure. Of every rupee the government spends, 17 paise will go to defence.

It is true that countries in the sub-continent, one of the poorest regions in the world, can scarcely afford to set aside such colossal sums on the competitive acquisition of armaments when the desperate need is to put every paisa they have into

making two ears of wheat grow where only one grew before. But what the country's leaders, planners and strategists have to reckon with is the capabilities of its neighbours, whatever their real or suspected intentions.

It was always clear right from the beginning, when the Reagan administration changed U.S. policy towards Pakistan by 180 degree to give that country a crucial role in American anti-Soviet containment strategy, especially following the events in Afghanistan, that the U.S. would not think twice about treading on India's toes if that was the price that had to be paid to make the Pakistanis co-operate more than willingly.

All the hue and cry that India made over the supply of American F-16s to Pakistan did not dent one bit the Reagan administration's determination to provide them. Since then, while India has toned down its protestations somewhat, the illusion continues to be nourished in some quarters, helped along by American persuasiveness, that the Americans can still be dissuaded, because of their belated desire to woo a reluctant India that is an "emerging world power", as they sometimes flatteringly refer to this country, from pumping iron into Pakistani muscles.

The same self-delusion obtains in the matter of the waiver of the Symington Amendment. When it was set aside in 1981, the Reagan administration was attacked by some of its Indian critics for having put anti-Sovietism before the cause of global non-proliferation to which it professed itself to be dedicated.

This time as well, there are some expectations that the amendment will not be waived. Evidently, some of us just won't learn from experience. Despite mounting evidence that the Pakistanis are as near to possessing a bomb as anyone can get without actually proclaiming it from the house-tops, there has never been any doubt that the amendment would not stand in the way of their getting their \$ 4 billion and more.

Mounting Evidence

The Reagan administration's latest notification to the U.S. Congress should clinch the issue. But, it will be argued, the U.S. Congress is now controlled by the Democrats, while the executive is Republican. This is another illusion. Politics in America does not work on the black-and-white, opposition-ruling party lines with which we or other parliamentary democracies are familiar. The U.S. is so hung up on the Afghanistan issue, with the Reagan team doing its best to delay a solution so that the Russians can be bled there indefinitely, that Pakistan has become more crucial to the U.S., instead of the other way round. Pakistan's nuclear ambitions and capabilities, however well-documented, will not deter the U.S. from helping it as a *quid pro quo*.

Only the other day, the *Washington Post* reported that U.S. intelligence sources believe that Pakistan, "is now capable of exploding a nuclear device". This is no overnight discovery, yet the knowledge has not prevented Mr Reagan in the past, nor will it prevent him again, from certifying to the U.S. Congress that Pakistan "does not possess a bomb".

The Carnegie Endowment report

by Mr Leonard Spector, which was released just before the Solarz committee hearings, has said in so many words that Pakistan is in possession of all the necessary components to manufacture "one or several atom bombs". In oral testimony, Mr Spector has called president Reagan's annual certification of Pakistan's innocence in the matter "disingenuous".

The U.S. congressional committee headed by senator Glenn regards Mr Reagan's clearance of Pakistan as dubious on the ground that, while it is technically possible to say it has no bomb, it is a mere screwdriver's twist or two away from giving itself one.

In this context, the Pakistani nuclear scientist, Dr A.Q. Khan's interview to the Indian journalist, Mr Kuldeep Nayar, in which he said categorically that Pakistan did possess an atom bomb—he has since tied himself up in knots in a series of denials and retractions—has mystified some Indian observers since its timing seems to throw a spanner in Pakistan's works by seeking to ensure that the Symington Amendment will not be set aside in the face of such overwhelming evidence of its nuclear capability.

Strategic Interests

Yet, it would be no exaggeration to say that the amendment may be waived, as all indications show that it will be, not despite such evidence, but because of it. All along, the Reagan administration has argued that military and economic munificence must be lavished on Pakistan to prevent it from going nuclear. Were it to appear that it has all but done so, why should the Reagan administration not give it all that, the U.S. wants to give it on the ground that to do so would prevent it from actually exploding a device? In other words, Pakistan can both eat its cake and have it.

India should long ago have reconciled itself to U.S.-Pakistani closeness, strategic, political and economic. Nothing is going to change this in the foreseeable future, not even a change of stewardship within both countries. There are still sections of Indian opinion that nurture the belief that the U.S. deep down sees India as the long-term bulwark of its strategic interests in this area. The relationship with Pakistan is seen, in this view as no more than a long-drawn-out flirtation that must end sooner or later.

Yet, the history of Indo-U.S. relations has been one of increasingly divergent political and strategic interests, despite longstanding cultural and more recent economic ties. The pattern of that relationship is not going to change so long as India adheres to non-alignment and the U.S. remains steadfast in the Manichaean anti-Sovietism. The arming of Pakistan by the U.S. may never mean that Pakistan can one day defeat us in battle. Certainly, our own military acquisitions will ensure against any such humiliation. But it does enable Pakistan to inflict greater punishment on us than in the past. It is in that perspective that American policy towards Pakistan must be seen and glib American assurances about maintaining India's regional position dismissed as so much hypocrisy.

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Folk Poetry from All Quarters

By David Holloway

The Unwritten Song: Poetry of the Primitive and Traditional Peoples of the World. Edited by Willard R. Trask. (Cape. Two Vols: Vol. I, 55s; Vol. II, 60s.)

The Indians' Book: Songs and Legends of the American Indians. Edited by Natalie Curtis. (Constable for Dover. 38s.)

A GREAT deal of guff is written and talked about folk music, poetry and art. Rose Macaulay, in "The Towers of Trebizond," had some deadly things to say about the earnest BBC collectors with their tape recorders eternally aimed at the long-suffering natives.

However, there can be no denying that there is a real fascination in hearing and reading the transcriptions of poetry, songs, chants that were invented purely as sounds and not as part of any written literature. Such work is interesting for two entirely different reasons: first, for the insight it gives into the lives and customs of the people, and secondly for the rare beauties that emerge from the oodles of dull stuff which may have sounded splendid in the original but is dreary in translation. One song from the Society Islands has in translation the repeated line, "O my beautiful erring spouse!" Just about the least poetic line one can think of.

There have been many collections of primitive song, but few have attempted to be world-wide. Willard R. Trask has performed a considerable service by gathering together a very full selection from all parts of the world. He has combed the anthropological journals and books about specific regions and has made a substantial two-volume anthology.

It is possible to compare, for instance, the love songs of the Eskimos and the South Sea Islanders. Not surprisingly the people of the North are to say the least of it "buttoned up" in their expressions of love, and who shall blame them. An Eskimo song from Northern Siberia goes: "I found here for myself a woman. She walks much in an overcoat of calico. She is a ruddy one. She is a pretty one."

In the warmth of the South Seas the approach is somewhat different. Here is part of a long

erotic poem called "Girl's Song" from the Caroline Islands:

At night we go out from the house
Walk around on the sand.
And find a beautiful place
In the woods on a bed of coconut leaves.
There we lie down together,
Where the fragrant lamul-tree grows.
He takes off his loincloth,
He pulls me to him. . . .

Just as there are obvious differences, so there are a number of strange similarities. It is surprising to see in how many different parts of the world the form that a funeral song takes is of the dead man speaking and observing the scene of his funeral. War songs, certainly as read in cold print, are almost universally dull. Curses and charms can make compulsive reading, provided they are specific. (Something, of course, that Shakespeare knew: "Eye of newt . . .")

Mr. Trask, in his two forewords—the book was published in America in two entirely separate halves and is brought out together for the first time now—suggests parallels with Shakespeare and John Donne. He did not notice, though, one first line that might have come straight from Donne: "Refuse me if you will, girl!" It was collected by a Frenchman in Mozambique.

Some of the most impressive entries are very short. Here is a drum song in the Mossi language from Upper Volta, West Africa: "The blind man's stew is a black stew, a stew of tears." That is all, and this is the whole of a Cherokee "Old War Song": "The stones are all that last long." From Afghanistan comes this couplet: "I have never known sorrow/Now it is a field I have inherited and I till it."

From the collection of that great man Verrier Elwin comes this appealing short love song:

In every lamp the wick longs for
oil,
My heart longs for your bed.

Give Us Our Due

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"Mohenjodaro Find" (Aug. 2, 1983), contradicting the claim of Pakistan's Director of Archaeology that Mohenjodaro was discovered by Sir John Marshall. I am pained to read the editorial "Digging out the Past" (Jan. 22, 1984). It seems that my letter and reference to page 10 of the book "Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization" by Sir John Marshall (London 1931) have gone unnoticed.

The editor's contention that "Without the efforts of men such as Mortimer Wheeler we would not have discovered Mohenjodaro and Harappa sites", is not only far from the truth but a serious distortion of facts. Mohenjodaro was discovered and recognised as one of the earliest civilizations in the world in 1922 by Mr. R. D. Banerji, and Harappa much earlier by Sir Alexander Cunningham, who visited Harappa in 1853-56 and made a record of the seal that led Sir John Marshall to excavate the site.

Sir Mortimer Wheeler appeared on the Indian archaeological scene only in 1944, when many monumental volumes had already

been published by Sir John Marshall, H. Hargreaves and E. T. H. Mackay, M. S. Vats, D. R. Sahni and K. N. Dikshit. In Harappa, Sir Mortimer Wheeler on reexcavation in 1944 only added knowledge of the defence system and about burials, but because of the publicity received through western scholars and a few vested interests among our own men, he was able to suppress the works of all Indian archaeologists like R. D. Banerji, Daya Ram Sahni, R. K. Dikshit and M. S. Vats. His original contribution to Indian history was limited to a study of the Roman contacts with India.

On the other hand, Dr. H. D. Sankalia has now boldly pointed out in his article "Give the past its due" (Jan 22): "We cannot forgive him (Mortimer Wheeler) for the death blow he gave to epigraphy, from which it never recovered."

I wonder why and how great Indian scholars like him could have remained silent for so long on such an important issue of our history. I may quote below a few serious lapses on our part, which deserved very strong protests from one and all in the field of archaeology.

(1) Prof. Graham Clark's lecture series on "Sir Mortimer and

Indian Archaeology" (published by the Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, in April 1979) contains the following lines on page 31: "Mohenjodaro, excavated between 1921-31 by a number of scholars, including R. D. Banerji (who found Harappa seals there), M. S. Vats, D. R. Sahni, K. N. Dikshit, Sir John Marshall, Hargreaves and Mackay, and published with commendable promptitude". (How sad that the words in brackets about R. D. Banerji in the quotation minimise the work done by him).

(2) The news item, "Mohenjodaro remains may be lost forever" in almost all the leading newspapers of India in the last week of July 1983, carried the statement of the director of Pakistan Archaeology that "it (Mohenjodaro) was discovered in 1922 by a British archaeologist,

Sir John Marshall". (I was the only one to protest in my letter to the Times of India, Aug. 2, 1983, against this.)

(3) On Sept. 28, 1983, in its National Programme from 9.15 to 9.45 p.m. Doordarshan, Delhi, relayed a programme on Mohenjodaro under the auspices of the external affairs ministry. The person who wrote the script of the programme probably did not know or forgot to mention the name of R. D. Banerji, whereas he gave almost all the names of the foreign scholars directly or even indirectly connected with the discovery and excavation of Mohenjodaro.

In conclusion, I would like to draw attention to the statement, made in the editorial: "We have an archaeological department. But it is so short of funds and experts with knowledge and

dedication that it is hardly in a position of fulfil its responsibility to the nation". I feel that the judgement is too hasty and too harsh considering the technical knowledge and dedication of the majority of staff members of one of the oldest departments of the government of India. It seems the department must have fallen lately on days much more evil than in 1939, when an eminent archaeologist, Sir Leonard Woolley, had to be summoned to report on the drawbacks of the department and advise the government accordingly.



Confused Signals To Pakistan

Inability To Take A Firm Line

By GIRILAL JAIN

THE Prime Minister's P.R. men have sought to explain his decision to replace Mr Venkateswaran as foreign secretary in terms of his desire to send a signal to Islamabad that it must learn to behave if it is indeed interested in improving relations with this country.

This theory would have us believe that, during his recent visit to Islamabad Mr Venkateswaran had given a wrong signal by saying that Mr Rajiv Gandhi would be visiting Pakistan during 1987 in his capacity as chairman of SAARC, that the Prime Minister considered it necessary to put the record straight and that the best way to do so was to replace Mr Venkateswaran.

We have no means of finding out whether Mr Gandhi's P.R. men have in fact reflected his thinking, or have made up this story to justify his extraordinary behaviour in virtually dismissing the head of the foreign service in the presence of the world press. Of the two propositions, the first would be a serious cause for concern.

Cause For Concern

Four days before the Prime Minister's press conference, top defence ministry officials had briefed some Indian editors on Pakistan's extraordinary deployment on the border. Reports based on these briefings had appeared in the press two days before the press conference. By the day of the press conference, Indian troops were moving to forward positions. If all this was not a clear enough signal to Pakistan that it was asking for trouble, it is inconceivable that the replacement of the foreign secretary could serve that purpose.

Let us suppose there had been no troop movement. In that event, implicit in the view credited to the Prime Minister would have been the assumption that Pakistani policy-makers are so naive as to read into Mr Gandhi's supposed willingness to visit their country, and that too as chairman of SAARC, a readiness on India's part to disregard its interests, that they would treat a visiting foreign secretary's statement as conclusive evidence of New Delhi's incapacity to look after its vital interests, and that they would be duly chastened by a display of temper by Mr Rajiv Gandhi against an erring official.

The second possibility, that the P.R. men invented the signal theory, is less disturbing. But that too would suggest either that the Prime Minister's spokesman are not particularly sharp, or that they have a very poor opinion of those of us to whom they tried to sell it. Since there is no necessary contradiction between the two, both propositions could also be true. In any case, it is truly amazing that anyone should have bought that theory. Incidentally, this also shows how far many of us in the journalistic fraternity are still prepared to go in justifying Mr Gandhi's actions.

We do not know whether one of the whiz-kids around the Prime Minister has told him how President Nixon used to pretend to be off-balance in order to frighten the Russians and the Chinese that he might resort to the use of nuclear weapons in case they unduly aggravated his problems in Indo-China and how this tactic paid off in the short run. Mr Nixon was able to

hold summits in Moscow and Peking when he continued air raids on North Vietnam.

But if Mr Rajiv Gandhi intended similarly to play roulette with the Pakistanis, the occasion presented itself a couple of days after his public humiliation of Mr Venkateswaran when the defence ministry disclosed that Indian troops had occupied defensive positions along the border in response to a similar deployment by Pakistan. After this, the Prime Minister could have sat back, leaving the Pakistanis wondering about his plans. Within days, they would have been running for cover, even if they are masters in brinkmanship.

Mr Rajiv Gandhi did the very opposite. As he ordered the red alert, he asked his ministers to send for the U.S. and Soviet ambassadors so that their governments could be informed of the situation on the Indo-Pakistani border and asked to use their influence in Islamabad to persuade it to take steps to ease tension. This is the final repudiation of the signal theory. Indeed, the contrary can be argued. Mr Gandhi can be said to have conveyed a different message to Islamabad even if unintentionally. It is doubtful if Mrs Indira Gandhi would ever have made public the forward deployment of troops and called in the U.S. ambassador at such an early stage. Of course, she would never have dismissed the foreign secretary at a public function. She, too, acted in an arbitrary manner, but in a far more controlled way.

It is obvious enough that we have managed to send confused signals to Islamabad. While that is bad enough, that is not all. Behind the confused signals lies the absence of a clear understanding of Pakistan's intentions and a reasonably well-defined response to it. *La affaire Venkateswaran*, too, is a case of confused signals. He has been sacked for doing what he has sent to Islamabad to do— to explore the possibilities of improving relations with it. Even if his statement on Mr Gandhi's visit to Pakistan as head of SAARC was unauthorised and outside his brief (was there in fact a brief?), it was part of an attempt on his part to convince the Pakistanis that India was keen to strengthen ties with them.

Basic Problem

This self-contradictory approach is, of course, not a sudden development. It has characterised India's Pakistan policy ever since Mr Rajiv Gandhi came to the office of Prime Minister. Towards the end of 1985, during President Zia's stopover visit to New Delhi, he had even drawn up a detailed programme of ministerial discussions culminating in his own visit to Islamabad in May 1986 to sign a treaty with Pakistan only to discover subsequently that the obstacles in the path of Indo-Pakistan friendship could not be so easily brushed aside.

To be fair to Mr Gandhi, Indo-Pakistan relations do not admit of a one-track approach. A certain amount of contradiction is built into them by the very nature of the two countries. They are not ordinary neighbours. Our refusal to align ourselves with the Soviet Union and repeated attempts, greatly stepped up under Mr Rajiv Gandhi, to befriend the United States must also

make it difficult for us to pursue a consistent policy towards Pakistan. And so must also Islamabad's nuclear weapons programme. Even so, it should have been possible for Mr Gandhi to avoid the kind of wild fluctuations from which his Pakistan policy has suffered.

Mr Gandhi's basic problem has clearly been his inability to decide whether or not it is possible for India to win Pakistan's friendship. While experience showed that friendship was not just possible with Islamabad and the foreign policy establishment by and large underscored this point, his own instinct led him, as in the case of accords at home in Punjab, Assam and Mizoram, to believe that he could dispose of the bitter legacy with Pakistan. As in the case of the domestic problems, he perhaps felt that his mother had unnecessarily aggravated the conflict with Pakistan. And it is certain beyond doubt that the Americans used their influence to push him in that direction. But, unlike at home, he could not clinch any deal with Islamabad because it did not, and indeed could not oblige. Inevitably, every initiative for friendly ties with Islamabad has been followed by a retreat which, in turn, has been followed by a new initiative. Equally inevitably, frequent changes of external affairs ministers have made the confusion worse confounded.

Danger Exaggerated

It can be argued that Mrs Indira Gandhi exaggerated the danger from Pakistan, whether wilfully for propaganda purposes, or out of distrust of Islamabad's American ally, or out of a conviction that Islamabad was deeply involved with the terrorists in Punjab. The hollowness of Pakistan's religion-based nationalism, and therefore the country's vulnerability, had also not become fully obvious while she was alive.

But while there was a cause for Mr Rajiv Gandhi to take a more relaxed view of Pakistan, three points should have soon become obvious to him. First, that President Zia had managed to reconcile his pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability with the receipt of U.S. weapons. Secondly, that Washington had concluded that Pakistan was too valuable a strategic asset for it to risk a futile bid to stop it from going in for nuclear weapons, or to woo India. And thirdly, that Islamabad was not likely to give up the advantages that flowed from its low-cost encouragement to extremism and terrorism in Punjab. This awareness should have defined the parameters of Mr Gandhi's Pakistan (and America) policy. In plain terms, he should have recognised that friendship was out of the question with Pakistan.

By the time Mr Gandhi came to power, it was also possible to predict the disastrous consequences of continued military (Punjab-Pathan) rule and the policy of serving as a conduit for US arms for Afghan *Mujahideen*. If someone did that for him, he apparently ignored it. But these are fully evident now. The bloody Pathan-Muhajir clashes in Karachi and other ethnic conflicts speak of a major crisis in Pakistan. Such a Pakistan calls for a very different response from India than Mr Rajiv Gandhi has been making.

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An Afghan Journey

I—Contours Of The "New Phase"

By NIKHIL CHAKRAVARTY

BABUR in his memoirs quotes a couplet which says that "Kabul is mountain, is river, is city, is lowland, all in one" and they say that it "has a very pleasant climate—if the world has another so pleasant, it is not known." Babur's description came to mind as the Indian Airlines Boeing crossed the Bare hills that encircle Kabul and came down on the sprawling cluster of dust-thrown houses to touch down at the extensive airport.

There was a nip in the air, a pleasant chilly breeze in the morning sun as I began my two weeks of holiday-cum-study tour of a country which for the past five years has been at the vortex of international tension. For an Indian however, Afghanistan has a rich history that is woven into ours—a history that dates farther back beyond Babur. For, here was the staging-post for Alexander's eastern odyssey, and in the numerous folds of these mountains could be found the magnificent relics of the Indo-Greek, the Bactrian and the Kushan periods not far from Kabul was the famed summer capital of Kanishka at Kapisa and in its neighbourhood the great Buddhist monastery of Shotorak which Huen Tsang visited. Ghazni and Kandhar are names familiar to every Indian schoolboy.

Exploration Of City

And so as a student of history I began with a leisurely exploration of Kabul city, both old and new, visiting Babur's grave along the hillside—an austere memorial crowning the inevitable Mughal Garden with terraced fountains; and I spent my first two mornings in the magnificent national museum on the outskirts of the city.

Life in the bazaar has all the bustle that has come down the centuries—from the Badam Bazar, the world's best dry-fruit mart, to the *Chor Bazar* where one can buy most of one's requirements second hand, garments and boots, fur caps and shoes, utensils and even cameras—business as usual.

While strolling through these crowded but colourful bazaars, I could not help recalling that in one of these hovels overhead, Subhas Chand Bose had taken shelter when he left India incognito during World War II in his tireless strivings to enlist foreign assistance for India's freedom struggle. Also here in Kabul was set up after World War I, the first provisional government of independent India by Raja Mahendra Pratap.

Towering over the city are the rugged ruins of Bala Hisar, once the seat of Afghan power, under attack from British invaders in the last century. A rival to it is the hill feature called *Asamai*, which is supposed to be a variant of the Sanskrit '*Asha-Mai*' (mother of hope) whose slopes are dotted with houses and hovels.

The old city lives cheek by jowl with the modern one. At one end is the intercontinental jostling with Bagh-e-Bala overlooking the city, and at the other end, the modern airport built by

the Americans. At the centre of a busy roundabout flutters the flag of Pashtoonistan, not far from the presidential palace, now called the house of the people, where Mr Babrak Karmal lives and works.

Once a busy tourist centre, Afghanistan today is placed under cold war quarantine by the west. It is precisely to have a peep into what's happening inside a country kept in such political excommunication that I took my busman's holiday. And it was rewarding indeed. Without the protocol constrictions on formal interviews, I could meet Mr Babrak Karmal, prime minister, Sultan Ali Keshntmand, foreign minister Dost, deputy defence minister General Azini and a host of other VIPs, apart from a good cross-section of non-aligned diplomats, together with our very perceptive ambassador Dixit and his alert team.

While only one single aspect of present-day Afghanistan has had a virtual monopoly of attention, namely the presence of the Soviet troops, hardly any notice has been taken outside about what is otherwise happening in that country. No doubt the Soviet armed forces are in Afghanistan in large numbers though all the figures about them are guesstimates made according to each one's pronounced bias. But I did not see them sporting their superior air in the streets and bazaars of Kabul as the British Tommy and the American G.I. used to do in our country during the war days. They stay mostly in their own camps and restricted areas: only an occasional armoured carrier would confirm their presence in the city. At sensitive spots one could see the Soviet soldier on security duty.

There are however aspects of developments, mostly unnoticed outside, which I thought provide the contours of a new phase, in which recklessness is replaced by abundant caution. In fact, the literature of the Afghan government and the ruling party—the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA) call the period since December 1979, that is, after the overthrow of Mr Hafizullah Amin, the "new phase" of the revolution, the revolution which took place in April 1978 with the fall of president Daud, who in turn had toppled the monarchy in 1973.

Tourist Centre

And this new phase is also called the "evolutionary" phase to ward off the ghost of extremist adventurism that passed off as "revolutionary" under Mr Hafizullah Amin. The "evolutionary" character of the programme and activity of the present regime could be noticed in many spheres—in the handling of the tribal problem, the question of Islam, and, many other issues from co-education to economic policy. It is important to note here that Mr Karmal throughout his political career has always been opposed to sectarian ultra-revolutionism, a sort of moderate if one prefers to call him so. And it was this among other things which led within six months of the 1978 revolution to his exile along with

a number of other leaders, including the present prime minister, Sultan Ali Keshntmand, who was thrown into prison and tortured by Mr Amin's police.

Mr Karmal has defined the new stage as the consolidations of "the national democratic transformation of Afghanistan"—its two specific components thus being "national" and "democratic". Granting any possible exaggeration about the havoc played during Mr Amin's regime, it is generally conceded by most observers in Kabul that by December 1979, the central government had control of only 40 per cent of the territory while the insurgents had hold over 60 per cent. This by itself throws new light on the real nature of the Afghan insurgency—it was originally more in the nature of a revolt against the ultra-revolutionary deeds (or misdeeds) under Mr Amin than against the Soviet presence (which in Mr Amin's days was minimal). An important Afghan leader told me, quite frankly that Mr Amin's erroneous policies facilitated the rebels and provided them with a sizable internal base.

Political Prisoners

Hafizullah Amin's steamroller modernism infuriated vast sections of the Afghan people. Tribal loyalties and sentiments were antagonised as the Amin regime launched a virtual crusade against Islam and went to the absurd length of enforcing co-education in the adult literacy classes in the deep interior. The economy was left in a shambles as he went in for a fantastic drive for nationalisation of even petty trade. On the other hand, large-scale police persecution was directed not only against the adversaries but against many of the PDPA members.

I could get a feel of this when I went to two of the northern provinces of Balkh and Jauzian. In the small town of Sheberghan I talked to a local party functionary who told me how he had to go underground by the middle of 1978 and operate from his hiding, gathering those of this cadres who had seen through Mr Amin's wrong policies. In one province as many as 55 party members had been killed by Mr Amin's police on some excuse or the other. In Kabul, the number quoted is over one thousand, while political prisoners killed totalled over 6,000.

And as the talk went on deep into the night, I could get an idea of what happened under Mr Amin: in his rough-hewn direct style, Mr Nasim Mehanparast, the zonal party chief—not a Moscow-returned party boss—told me how they had long ago regarded Mr Karmal as their real leader who sneaked back several times from his exile to organise the underground party. The last time he came was about two months before he could come out in the open only on the fall of Amin. I checked up with one of the trusted aides of Mr Karmal and he confirmed this version and explained that if Mr Karmal had appeared even one day earlier he would have been immediately killed by Mr Amin's men.

(To Be Continued)

II—An Afghan Journey

By NIKHIL CHAKRAVARTY

BEYOND Shebergan we drove in a jeep through a country road for about 15 kilometres and reached a Turkmani village, Kokgunbad, where in a mud hut lighted by a petromax I saw wrinkled faces of the old by the side of rosycheeked youngsters attending a literacy class, all with guns resting against the bench. Further on, Mr Rasui Palwan, a tall handsome young man took me to his newly-build home, where he had shifted only this year. Before the land distribution, he was a share-cropper under the landlord, getting only one-seventh of the crop, and living in a corner of the cattleshed.

After the land distribution he now owns eight *jiribs* of land; only one-sixth of its produce he needs for his own family and the rest he sells to the government and out of the sale he gets sufficient cash to live a comfortable life. I noticed a wrist watch on his hand, he shyly said he bought it this year. Why? The landlord had a watch on his hand, and so I always dreamt I must get one. The moment I had money enough after building this house, I bought this watch. "Where is the landlord now? He has run away at the beginning but now he has come back. What's he doing now? He has also got some land and he is cultivating it."

Next morning, I went to another village, a little far away, branching off from the highway, 3 kilometres by a *kutchra* road. Misrabat is the centre of 20 villages in a co-operative, growing wheat, cotton and barley. The village has an active unit of the decenders of revolution brigade, a paramilitary rural militia which the villagers themselves run mainly to guard the cluster of villages against insurgents. They took me to the hall of the local Fatherland Front, a coalition of all active organisations. It is built by the peasants themselves; on the wall hangs a portrait of Babrak Karmal.

Pride For Indira

The most impressive was the cult women's brigade, meeting next door in itself front of a barn: spontaneous outburst of friendly feelings towards the great clasp of Hindustan was overwhelming; side and also pride that Indira Gandhi, a lady is presiding over its affairs. Their large leader Nair Khal, an earnest young woman had won a medal. Carrying a gun, the women in her unit meet separately and take up guard duty in specified sectors during the day. They have their women's organisation, through which many welfare activities are conducted.

At the last village I went to, Yaka Bagh, a meeting of villagers was being held to distribute land gift deeds to the landless; a local official had come and also the party chief of the area. The function started with a recital from the Quran by a village elder and the entire congregation joined in a brief prayer. And then, as the names were called out one by one, each peasant would come forward with a bounce, would kiss the official on both his cheeks and then take the parchment with a broad smile. For him it was like a dream of many generations really coming true—a plot of land of his own.

The land distribution has taken place by necessity only where stable conditions have been achieved. As the villagers explained, the question of who should get how much land is decided by the entire village community through the *jirga*. It is not just an administrative mechanism; the *jirga* of the entire village surveys how

much land was available and then decides the priority list as to who should get first and how much. Because this exercise has the sanction of the entire village, I am told, the scope for nepotism is minimal. Tractors are available through co-operatives, which secure them for use from the government-run tractor stations.

An important feature of the agrarian policy is that it attaches as much importance to land distribution as on ensuring the availability of water; the stress is on land-and-water reforms—an understandable anxiety in a country largely arid. While in the government's long-term objective, extensive programme for large-scale irrigation figures prominently, in the short haul, it is mainly confined to small irrigation schemes. The stress in the development plan today, I am told is on road building, communication and exploitation of mineral wealth. Land-locked Afghanistan is without a single mile of railways. If the country is steeped in tribal parochialism, it is largely because of lack of communication and transport—factors which not only impede the return of peace and stability in today's conditions but also explains why the central authority could not set up an administrative network throughout the country.

Illiteracy Removal

Afghanistan never had an organised administration throughout the country. The writ of the central authority in Kabul, whether under the monarchy or under Daud's presidential regime or even after the revolution, did not run in the provinces: the tribal chiefs ran the country in most places, some of them enforcing their own set of laws and exercising power over life and death. Under the present regime, a very important change is being introduced. The recently enacted law of local organs of state power and administration envisages active participation of the local people through the *jirgas* which are to be invested with legislative authority in the locality.

Mr Karmal himself emphasised that "the executive, legislative and administrative powers in the localities will be in the hands of the elected representatives of the people". The *jirgas* will take the decisions and the executive committees and representatives of the people in *jirgas* would organise the implementation of these decision through mass participation, and thereby enforcing socio-economic reforms as also cultural targets like illiteracy removal. When one looks at this programme along with the setting up of different types of civilian militia, one gets the outline of a well-knit state structure in the future—a perspective which Afghanistan never realised in the near or the distant past.

The traditional symbol of government authority in the Afghan village is the *qaryadar*, or the village chief. While in the past he was appointed by the central government, now he is elected by the villagers themselves. Mr Karmal told the central committee of his party: "It is necessary to establish firm and lasting relations with these *qaryadars* and their authority should be recognised in due time. The *qaryadar* should be rendered active, and assisted in solving urgent issues." His only caution was that the old feudal lords must not capture the post, and so the insistence on election by the entire village.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

III—An Afghan Journey

By NIKHIL CHAKRAVARTY

IN areas where tribalism prevails—and this is true of very large parts of the country—local traditions are kept in mind by the government, and special allocations made for their development. For this purpose, agreements are signed with tribal *Jirghas* in which the defence of the frontiers figures prominently: special attention is paid to the elders and tribal dignitaries so that they could be attracted to the work of the local state organs.

As far as I could make out what is being attempted in Afghanistan today is to go in for a set-up which will be modern in content but traditional in form. There is emphasis on the *Jirgha* functioning everywhere, since this organ is understood and accepted by the people at large. As an important functionary made it clear to me, this new administrative machinery is expected to be set up in the immediate future over one-third of the country and the rest will be covered in a phased manner.

Significant Feature

A significant feature of the present regime is that it is not dominated by the Pushtoons, who had enjoyed a virtual monopoly of preponderance in Afghan politics. Himself of Pushtoon origin, Mr Karmal's ministers come from different tribes—prime minister Keshmand is from Hazara tribe, foreign minister Dost comes from Tajik stock. In the armed forces, I came to learn, fifty per cent come from tribes other than Pushtoons.

This brings in new dimension into Afghan politics. While it is possible that the rebel groups, mostly from the Pushtoon origin, might try to exploit this feature of the New Delhi regime, harping on Pushtoons losing their domination, the Afghan state structure might become more durable with such multi-tribal participation. Such a development may have new implications for the Pushtoonistan question, which continues to be a key problem for every Afghan government. In this context, Mr Babrak Karmal's May Day speech this year is noteworthy as it extended solidarity not only to the Pushtoons but also to Baluchis and Sindhis in Pakistan.

Not only in government circles, but outside the establishment as well, Pakistan's martial law regime is looked down upon with a touch of disdain. An Afghan diplomat who had served under the old regime sharply reacted when I referred to the Pakistan government not being ready to recognise the Karmal regime: "We are not seeking their recognition: they could not get recognised by their own people over whom their rule by means of the gun, and that gun also was not their own but gifted from masters abroad." Even the large number of refugees who have crossed over to Pakistan are not necessarily admirers of the Zia regime. I could perceive this in Peshawar and Quetta in 1981; for them the Durand line only divided their people and it was natural for them to cross it when they thought

things were not to their home.

There is another aspect of Afghan experiment which I help noticing. At Mazhar, when I went to see the famous Mosque, which is at the very heart of the city, I noticed the gorgeously decorated with bluestone. I enquired all the repairs and maintenance charges are borne by the Islamic affairs department which provides for salaries for the seminary priests. On the other hand, they volunteered that under the religion was taboo, but under the mal due respect is shown to him if his repeated references was only a tactical move, but people have their own traditions and characteristics built through history. We respect them. Nothing can be by force. We don't interfere belief of our people. We observe and respect the principles and values of the sacred of Islam, but we guarantee law and in our day-to-day noticed that not only old were repaired but some new in the new phase. And what Kabul, I heard about the arranging and subsidising grime. At the same time, detect attempts at getting obscurantism: in May this government announced that could take up religious facility long denied to them.

Refugee And Rebel

There is no question but take time for the situation. The careful approach and moderation exercised by the government in dealing with aspects of tribal life will be in the long run. As at present, it is incorrect to say that the reaching normalcy. What with some amount of certain given the prevailing balance within Afghanistan the hump has crossed the Afghan state future of the Afghan state concerned. In other words, the are not in a position to be

I noticed Prime Minister making a distinction between the refugee and the rebels, recruited and trained in Pakistan with arms from the be fought and overpowered refugees are to be persuaded I am told that the tide turn: it is claimed that refugees have returned in different parts of the doubt, it is still at a slow The basic weakness rebels—styling Mujahideens and revolutionaries—need to be authoritatively and dispassionately (To be Continued)

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ory of four blind men describing an elephant applies to assessments of great historic figures Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru in our case. Most of us can at best grasp part of the about them. The totality of their personality is generally beyond our intellectual capacity comprehend.

Difficulty is compounded in the Mahatma's case. He was, of course, rooted in the Indian tra- He was, of course, influenced by Christianity in that it acted as a catalyst which activated his Indian inheritance. Similarly, he was, of course, deeply impressed by the very modern concepts of y, racial, social and economic, and nationalism. But an aggregation of these and other fac- cannot explain Gandhiji. The great man eludes us even more than other great men.

ne putting so complex an individual in an ideological straitjacket. In a sense, all of us have ying to do that to him. But attempts by Soviet scholars have fallen in an altogether different y. They have moved some way from the obscenities they heaped upon him and in the process themselves during the Stalin era when they described Gandhiji as a reactionary and an ally ish imperialism. But they cannot in the nature of things set aside their distorting ideolo- gences. So while it is pointless to quarrel with them, it is useful to find out from time to time they are thinking and saying about the father of the nation and the maker of modern India.

Dr. Zakaria, who recently headed a Congress Party delegation to the Soviet Union, does scholars, on their part, are more sympathetic to Nehru. But as Dr. Zakaria's article shows, do not understand his deepest aspirations either. He was not an ideologue; he was a patriot; commitment was not to socialism but to India.

Gandhi, Nehru

Continued from Page 1

their studies revealed that India, despite all odds that she had to encounter, was moving towards socialism.

I did not engage in a discussion with them on the question of "means" and "ends", or on the true import of democratic methods; but Prof. Ulyanovsky in his essay on Gandhi in his book affirms that Marxists and Leninists were committed "to use even the smallest possibilities of peaceful liberation movement and social revolution and have always considered that from the point of view of the workers' and all the working people's real interests peaceful means are preferable to armed struggle".

Being an atheist he, however, refuses to accept the efficacy of satyagraha and its impact on both the oppressed and the oppressor. He is unable to see in it an effective expression of soul force; to him it is just a form of "hunger strikes, demonstrations, local and general strikes, non-payment of taxes and boycott. These methods might have been used by peasant and workers movements in other parts of the world but they were as different from the Gandhian approach as chalk from cheese; in satyagraha violence had to be eschewed, truthful means adhered to and hatred shunned. The basis of satyagraha was love for even one's enemy or oppressor; the revolt, therefore, had to be peaceful, whatever be the provocation.

Prof. Ulyanovsky is aware of this distinction; but he is not prepared to give much credence to Gandhism for offering a solution to the problems of the oppressed. On the contrary, he glorifies violence in certain circumstances; to quote his words, "When peaceful methods prove ineffective because of the fierce resistance of foreign colonisers or the indigenous bourgeoisie and landowners, when the exploiters unleash an armed struggle against the people, Marxists—in view of the actual situation—propose a transition to more decisive methods of struggle, including the highest form of class struggle—armed uprising and civil war".

Gandhi could never subscribe to it; in a few exceptional cases.

to pre-empt, and explains that even the term socialism disappeared from Nehru's "vocabulary" until the mid-fifties when it appeared in his speeches, but "in a totally different interpretation", not revolutionary but reformist. However, it would be wrong, says Prof. Ulyanovsky, "to reproach Nehru for being wrong" or for taking "backward steps".

As he explains, "theoretically perhaps he deserves this criticism but it can be neither convincing nor justified if it does not take into consideration the objective factors in the recent history of India which conditioned and restricted revolutionary and socialist tendencies in Nehru's activity". As he had to work with a political "apparatus" controlled by right-wing elements and to lead "a government machine which had not overcome its faulty colonial legacy", Nehru was

he permitted the use of force but in his philosophy of satyagraha neither armed uprising nor civil war could ever find a place, much less the pursuit of class struggle, which was alien to his way of thinking. That is why Gandhi was different from Lenin, despite the love for the oppressed, which the two giants undoubtedly shared.

Prof. Ulyanovsky is highly appreciative of Gandhi's role in India's liberation struggle; he gives the Mahatma full credit for "his anti-imperialist policy and tactics and bold appeal to the people" and for drawing the masses into the social and political movement. He is, however, sceptical of Gandhi's "deep mistrust towards the independent revolutionary creativity of the masses" and of his "formula of guardianship". His conclusion is, therefore, equivocal: "Gandhi like no other (leader) could raise the Indian people against the colonialists but at the same time he could like no other (leader) hold the masses back from open revolution, ensuring for himself the possibility of holding talks with the colonial powers. It is self-evident that these tactics of Gandhi's made him the most outstanding leader of a liberation movement guided by the bourgeoisie".

Prof. Ulyanovsky is much better disposed towards Jawaharlal Nehru in his book, *The Maker of Modern India*. Nehru was a friend of the Soviet Union and an admirer of their communist experiment. Drawn early to Marxism, he boldly advocated scientific socialism as the solution for India's liberation at a time when the word was anathema to most of his colleagues in the Indian National Congress. Being a liberal by temperament, he was no less influenced by Gandhiji whose broad humanism had a compelling pull for him. That is why Nehru described himself as "an odd mixture of the East and the West"; he was more of an odd mixture of Gandhism and Marxism. Gandhi was confident that after him Nehru would speak his language; Prof. Ulyanovsky feels that Nehru spoke equally the language of Marx.

Prof. Ulyanovsky admits that "the effect of Marxism-Leninism on Nehru was never complete" but nonetheless he "basically recognised the Marxist interpreta-

tion of history and its impact on the mode of production and the effectiveness of the masses in any social and political movement and the need of class contradictions like Gandhi, Nehru accepted the need of class struggle and history, as Prof. Ulyanovsky points out, "as a logical development from lower stages of political development to higher ones". That was the reason he never felt any hesitations in believing that "capitalism was doomed" because of its "exploitative nature".

Nehru declared himself, also early in his career, as a supporter of scientific socialism and advocated it as the ultimate objective of India's liberation movement. But he had to encounter much opposition from the right elements in the Indian National Congress. Moreover, he was considerably handicapped because of the fact that "Gandhi did not share Nehru's radicalism". The Mahatma, according to Prof. Ulyanovsky, "more than once supported the right-wing conservative elements of the Congress in their struggle to maintain their positions". Nehru had often to play a dual role: "On the one hand he was the leader of the left wing and on the other a person who enjoyed the true love of Gandhi and was loyal to him by quite special ties, which no political commitment could break".

He worked for the unity of these forces and "hoped to influence Gandhi and the conservative majority of the Indian National Congress along revolutionary and socialist lines. This a correct approach? Prof. Ulyanovsky answers it in the affirmative and says that had he organised a split in the Congress it "would have been fatal to the anti-imperialist forces". Here Nehru proved much weaker and the right-wing forces which he had one compromise after another upon him and "from the half of the thirties the social and revolutionary tendencies were greatly". After independence, says Prof. Ulyanovsky, "a major shift took place in social and political views. The Marxist-Leninist ideas receded into the background and in the issues they almost totally disappeared." He goes further to remark that "the ideas of

Herein lies the difference in the Soviet approach to the two leaders: Gandhi's compromises are inexcusable but Nehru's understandable. This is clearly so because one was a non-Marxist and the other a Marxist. Prof. Ulyanovsky is, no doubt, sympathetic to the achievements of the Mahatma and some of the other non-Marxist leaders such as Sukarno, Nasser and Bourguiba included in the book, but all sins are forgiven to those who accept Marxism as the creed, however broadly or even vaguely. From a scholastic point of view it is a weakness but which Marxist scholar is free of it?

In his essay on Nehru, Prof. Ulyanovsky refers to the role of Mrs Indira Gandhi in furthering her father's socialist measures but feels that even the emergency and the 20-point programme proved to be "belated actions", which caused the defeat of the Cong-

role both internally and externally. In this he disagrees with the assessment of the C.P.M. but even of the future of India. Prof. Ulyanovsky remarks: "Marxist observers do not rule out strengthening of the concentration in the hands of the workers in the national liberation groups". Poor Satish Chandra, a shock to him in the trade union background, mentions the "alterations" in making the Constitution. "in mind", but doubts the purpose behind it. "Will the Congress method by which it remained or will it remain democratic institution led by Nehru?"

Patil supports Rajiv's appointment

BOMBAY, November 2: Maharashtra will stand solidly behind the Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the chief minister, Mr Vasantrao Patil, declared here last night.

Mr Patil told newsmen who called on him at his official residence, "Varsha", last evening that the people of Maharashtra will not forget the fact that the state owed its creation to Mrs Indira Gandhi, who was the then president of the Congress. There is no doubt that Mr Gandhi will ably carry out the tasks left unfinished by the late Prime Minister, Mr Patil observed and added that it was the "patriotic duty of everybody" to rally behind the new leadership.

Mr Patil felt that during this hour of crisis, all Congressmen, including those in the Congress (S), should come together and ensure that the forces of destabilisation are not allowed to have an upper hand. Mr T.G. Deshmukh and Dr W.R. Sherekar MLAs, said the rank and file would certainly welcome leaders like Mr Sharad Pawar in the party fold. They pointed out that during the recent Bombay session of the AICC, Mrs Gandhi herself had appealed to all congressmen to come together specially in view of the organisation's centenary celebrations.

Meanwhile the chanting of "Ramdhun" at the BRCC office continued. It will continue to be recited non-stop till the last rites are completed on Saturday.

He, however, refused to be drawn into a debate on the issue saying "it is their party's (Congress) internal affair."

We can spend the rest of our lives arguing whether Mrs Gandhi should have brought a reluctant Rajiv Gandhi into politics on the death of her younger son, Mr Sanjay Gandhi or whether she should have appointed him general secretary of the A-ICC and invested so much authority in him, that would be a futile exercise. The pertinent issue now is whether on the day of the assassination of Mrs Gandhi, Mr Rajiv Gandhi should have hurriedly been sworn in as Prime Minister, or whether it would have been better to have followed the precedents and sworn in the seniormost member of the existing cabinet as acting Prime Minister and then in Mr Rajiv Gandhi subsequently if and when the Congress Parliamentary Party had elected him as its leader. There is something to be said in favour of the view that such a course should have been followed. But while it would have accorded with the precedents and thereby catered to our penchant for conventions, it could have, been politically

Let us look at the precedents. Mr Nehru died a natural death and the issue of succession to him had been settled in advance when under the pretext of the Kamaraj plan he sent out Mr Morarji Desai and subsequently brought Lal Bahadur Shastri back into the Union Cabinet. Those also normal times with the result that there was no need to rush Mr Shastri's appointment. A more or less similar situation obtained at the time of Mr Shastri's death in January 1966. Since he was not expected to pass away so suddenly, a successor to him had not been chosen. But once he passed away, Mrs Gandhi's election as his successor was a foregone conclusion despite Mr Desai's insistence on a contest. Again, the war with Pakistan was over and the country did not face an emergency. For these two reasons—Mr Desai's insistence on a contest and the absence of an emergency—Mr G.L. Nanda was once again permitted to act as Minister till such time as the Congress Parliamentary Board could meet and elect Mrs Gandhi as its leader.

At this time the situation was totally different. Mrs Gandhi's assassination itself underscored the difference. It was a most pathetic demonstration of the twin fact that extremists and reactionists, acting with or without the support of external forces or agencies and the tacit approval of a substantial portion of their community, had infiltrated into critical organs of the state apparatus and that they (and their masters) were determined to undermine the Indian state. It is impossible for us to say whether or not those who had murdered Mrs Gandhi and their mentors and paymasters, if any, anticipated the violent reaction that has followed. We have no evidence either way. The reaction throughout the country was, however, a well known fact by the afternoon of Black Wednesday (October 31).

black Wednesday (October 31). The situation called for a quick move to fill the vacuum, to prevent it could be, so that the administrative machinery act with whatever degree of coherence it is capable of. There can be, indeed there are, genuine differences of opinion whether Mr Gandhi can fill the bill. Similarly, it is ultimately for one to take the view that some particular minister in Mrs Gandhi's government would have been qualified to cope with the situation. The implication in this case would be not that Mr Gandhi should have followed the interim Prime Minister but that he should preferably not have come in at all. This proposition would, however, run counter to the possibility that the Congress Parliamentary Party might not have found someone else acceptable. Again open to us to debate whether or not Mrs Gandhi had deliberately emasculated the party in order to ensure that it

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...erately emasculated the party in order to ensure
...d unite only on the choice of her son, first Mr Sanjay
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...exercise because the reality, whatever the cause, cannot
...rushed aside. Thus if it is assumed that the CPP would
...opted for Mr Gandhi, it is not easy to fault those who
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...ring crisis. So it is not necessary for us to invoke the
...pt of the presidential prerogative in an attempt to
...e this wholly legitimate deviation in apparent

... today needs above all a firm hand at the helm. It will
... artisan to prejudge the issue in favour of Mr Gandhi or
... At him. He will, of course, need to seek endorsement of
... people for himself and the Congress Party he now heads
... though not *de jure*. But this is just now the second
... and not the first. Also Mr Gandhi will need to pass the
... test of ensuring a quick end of the fratricidal conflict
... has come to engulf large parts of the country before he
... even face the second. He has passed one test of
... ship remarkably well. He has shown an extraordinary
... to remain calm in the face of a great personal and
... tragedy, and the mud reaction to it on the part of
... our...

ion of history and the mode of production, so the effectiveness of the masses in any political movement and the emergence of class contradictions like Gandhi, Nehru accepted the need of class struggle and class struggle as the main theme of history, as Prof. Ulyanovsky points out, "as a logical movement from lower stages of political development to higher ones". That was the reason he never felt any hesitation in believing that "capitalism was doomed" because of its "oppressive nature".

Nehru declared himself, early in his career, as a supporter of scientific socialism and advocated it as the ultimate objective of India's liberation movement. But he had to encounter much opposition from the right-wing elements in the Indian National Congress. Moreover, he was considerably handicapped because of the fact that Gandhi did not share Nehru's radicalism. The Mahatma, according to Prof. Ulyanovsky, "more than once supported the right-wing conservative elements of the Congress in their struggle to maintain their positions". Nehru had often to play a dual role: "On the one hand he was the leader of the left wing and on the other a person who enjoyed the trust and love of Gandhi and was loyal to him by quite special personal ties, which no political commitment could break".

He worked for the unity of these forces and "hoped to influence Gandhi and the conservative majority of the Indian National Congress along revolutionary and socialist lines. But this a correct approach? Prof. Ulyanovsky answers it in the affirmative and says that had Nehru organised a split in the Congress it "would have been fatal for the anti-imperialist forces". However, Nehru proved much weaker in the right-wing forces after he made one compromise after another upon him and "from the second half of the thirties the social and revolutionary tendencies suffered greatly". After the independence, says Prof. Ulyanovsky, "a major shift took place in social and political trends towards the right-wing and towards the social-Leninist ideas in the background and in the issues they almost totally ignored". He goes further and remarks that "the

one who played a role both internally and externally. In this he dis-
tinctly stands out from the assessment of not only the C.P.M. but even of the Congress.
What are the prospects for the future of India? Mr. K. P. S. Menon's remarks: "Many observers do not rule out the possibility of a strengthening of trade relations with the West towards the concentration of power in the hands of a few. This quite definitely indicates a definite depredation of national groups". Poor Sahib! He has given a shock to him in the trade union background of the Congress. The Congressist pretensions of the K. P. S. Menon's mentions the making of "alterations in the Constitution" in mind", but doubtless of purpose behind it.
"Will the Congress method by maintaining the status quo or will it remain democratic?"
asked by Nehru?

Rajiv, USSR PM hold talks

The Times of India News Service

NEW DELHI, November 4: "deep understanding" of the world situation. He told Mr Buta Singh, minister for parliamentary affairs, that Mr Gandhi would be able to fill the void created by Mrs Gandhi's assassination. He hoped that the "youthful and dynamic" leadership of Mr Gandhi would also help strengthen Indo-Soviet relations.

THE Soviet prime minister, Mr Nikolai Tikhonov, had another meeting with the Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, at Rashtrapati Bhawan this morning.

This was a impromptu meeting at the get-together of visiting dignitaries who met the President. Mr Zail Singh, and offered their condolences at the assassination of Mrs Gandhi.

Mr Tikhonov and Mr Gandhi met for about 15 minutes without any aides. In view of this brief meeting scheduled talks between the two before the departure of the Soviet prime minister were cancelled.

Mr Tikhonov had earlier met Mr Gandhi on Friday. He was accompanied by the Soviet vice-president, Mr V.V. Kuznetsov, and the deputy foreign minister, Mr V.F. Maltsev.

The Soviet prime minister before leaving expressed satisfaction with his meeting Mr Rajiv Gandhi saying that the new prime minister had a

Mrs Gandhi's death, he said was a setback to the forces of peace

At the get-together, several other world leaders met Mr Gandhi separately. These included the leaders from the Arab world, the South East Asian region and the prime minister of Afghanistan, Mr Khestmand. More than 115 delegations visited Rashtrapati Bhavan.

Many of the leaders said that Mrs Gandhi's assassination was a personal loss to them. The secretary-general of the Commonwealth, Mr S. Ramphal, said never before so many countries and so many causes had suffered in someone's death.

Several foreign dignitaries have urged the Prime Minister to take appropriate follow-up action on the six-month initiative to promote global peace and strive for nuclear disarmament.

They told Mr Gandhi that the world entertained "high hopes" in this regard.

Mrs Indira Gandhi, joined by leaders of five other nations, had earlier this year issued an appeal to nuclear powers to reduce their nuclear stockpile and stop all testing of nuclear weapons as a first step towards disarmament.

They spoke in glowing terms about Mrs Indira Gandhi's tremendous contribution to strengthening the Non-Aligned Movement and the forceful manner in which she presented the case of the third world at the Cancun summit.

These leaders, who attended the funeral of Mrs Gandhi, also felt that Mr Gandhi should draw up plans aimed at an early North-South dialogue

World leaders extend support

NEW DELHI, November 4

THE British prime minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, has promised to extend all support to the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi.

She told British newsmen last evening that she liked Mr Gandhi "very much indeed" and "I respect him greatly".

"I want you to know that he will have all the loyalty, support, affection and respect that we can give him in the days and months and years that lie ahead" Mrs Thatcher added.

Asked whether she was worried about India's stability and its special place in the Nonaligned Movement considering Mr Gandhi's inex-

perience, Mrs Thatcher said, "I feel that there will be a pulling together, a reconciliation to preserve the unity of India".

"Out of these tragedies can come strength and a quiet feeling of what is needed for the future, and I believe that feeling will be that reconciliation is the need and the unity of India will continue".

The British prime minister told Mr Buta Singh before explaining that if democracy had to survive, world would have to think seriously about curbing terrorism.

"Dissidence is alright in a democracy but terrorism in the garb of religion or communal frenzy is the worst enemy of democracy", she said.

She regretted that a "microscopic

minority" in her country had celebrated "this heinous crime".

"We in the United Kingdom will not allow such elements to commit crime against their respective countries, she said.

Sri Lankan president J.R. Jayewardene, while leaving for Colombo, said his meeting with Mr Rajiv Gandhi was "very Useful". He hoped that the new leadership would appreciate efforts being made by the Sri Lanka government for restoring normalcy in that country.

Almost every world leader, Mr Buta Singh told newsmen later, pledged support to Mr Rajiv Gandhi "in this hour of crisis". They felt he was the right choice as leader of the nation because he could hold the people together.

Representatives of nations also left New Delhi today. They include the Yemen Arab Republic, Bhutan, Ireland, Cambodia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, France and Argentina. Sri Lankan prime minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Agha Khan also left at noon.

French prime minister Jacques Chirac, who had a meeting with Mr Gandhi today, said President Mitterrand had the personal regard for Mrs Gandhi.

Mrs Gandhi on her part observed that she had a personal attachment for France. He also extended his personal regard for Mr Gandhi to visit France.

Police on the rampage

PUBLIC confidence in the police has diminished to near-vanishing point. This is no exaggeration. What has happened and is happening in Azamgarh is not a stray aberration but the culmination of a series of provocative and highhanded actions by the so-called custodians of law and order. When thieves fall out, honest men reportedly come into their own. But when lawyers and policemen—twin arms of law and order, are engaged in a frontal confrontation, peace-loving citizens understandably get into a state of panic. They do not know where to look for relief and security. The conviction is growing that the police no longer regard themselves accountable to the community itself. This is a cause for grave concern. The Azamgarh episode, which has triggered off unrest among lawyers on a State-wide scale, should not be lightly treated. Reportedly, like the postman knocking twice for the delivery of the mail, the embattled policemen knocked the protesting lawyers on the head on two days in succession.

Expediency dictates on the part of the policy-makers a hurried whitewashing of this disgraceful episode but neither the people nor the lawyers will be fobbed off by any wishy-washy statement by the Home Secretary or any Government spokesman high up in the official hierarchy. Even the judiciary stands aghast. The District Judge of Azamgarh, Mr. Saxena, has been quoted by a news agency as saying in great agitation: "I am critically examining all happenings. I am shocked to see all this. I have met the Chief Justice and the Administrative Judge at Allahabad and I am keeping them informed of the day-to-day happenings here."

Nobody denies that the policeman's lot is a hard one, especially under the present dispensation. He has to serve many masters and his primary duty, if recent experience is any guide, is to resort to force to put down any agitation, legal or illegal, with unbridled vigour. Progressively since independence, the government of the day have used the police to break up Opposition demonstrations, quell student unrest in the campus and made the Force generally behave as a private army of the powers-that-be. This has had a demoralising effect on the police. Alienated from the people by their highhandedness and "danda-happy" attitude, for which incidentally their mentors are primarily to blame, the general run of policemen have become a law unto themselves. Police involvement sometimes their

active participation in criminal activities, is no longer disputed. Since the Emergency days police power, according to competent critics, has increased to such an extent that "horrendous crimes could be perpetrated by policemen with impunity".

Some of the obiter dicta of the High Court judges in this connection keep ringing in the ears of the people. It is recalled that a certain High Court Judge had dubbed the police as the worst criminal gang in the country. Maybe that was a gross over-statement. But there is no denying that despite directives and policy statements by certain well-meaning mentors, the police in this country keep displaying an arrogance of power as revolting as it is shocking. A large segment is becoming more and more indisciplined and even corrupt as the Force is being progressively 'politicised' by designing politicians pacing the corridors of power. In certain areas in Maharashtra and Gujarat, and also in certain States in the North Indian belt "lucrative thanas" are periodically auctioned for the benefit of venal policemen prepared to pay the price for sharing the spoils with the political bosses. With discipline eroded and accountability practically non-existent, the Force is now shaping as a Frankensteinian monster which may conceivably turn any day against its own short-sighted, power-hungry and arrogant creators!

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Representatives of nations also left New Delhi. They include the Yemen Arab Republic, Bhutan, Ireland, Cambodia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, France and Argentina. Sri Lankan Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike and Agha Khan also left at noon.

French prime minister who had a meeting with Mitterrand today, said president Mitterrand had the personal regard for Mitterrand.

Mrs Gandhi observed that Fabus observed that attachment for France. He also extended personal regard for Mr Gandhi to visit.

How can you say that. You look wonderfully fit. All of us, whatever our age, feel aged.

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Asked whether she was worried about India's stability and its special place in the Nonaligned Movement considering Mr Gandhi's inexperience in religion or communal frenzy is the worst enemy of democracy", she said. She regretted that a "microscopic Gandhi" in this hour of crisis. They felt he was the right choice as leader of the nation because he could hold the people together. Fabus observed, had attachment for France. He also extended an invitation to Mr Gandhi to visit France.

THE national scene today is sombre and the pomp and pageantry of Republic Day cannot quite dispel the doubts and fears that assail the nation. There has been a slide-back both on the economic and political fronts. Prices continue to soar, adding to the common man's misery. Thanks to adverse weather conditions in the year gone by, agricultural production suffered a setback necessitating resumption of foodgrain imports. Even on the Government's own admission, the growth rate in the Year of Productivity was low though we can draw some consolation from the fact that the average for the last three years is higher than "trend rate of growth of gross national product." The massive trade deficit and the consequent depletion of foreign exchange reserves is causing serious concern. The IMF loan granted last year bailed us out temporarily but few people regard it as an unmitigated blessing. The strike by textile workers in Bombay has already entered its second year and industrial relations generally are far from satisfactory.

What is even more disconcerting is that the ability of the nation to tackle and overcome the economic problems facing it has been sadly impaired by the growing threat to its unity and integrity. There has been no let-up in the three-year-old Assam agitation and Assembly elections due to be held in that State next month are sought to be disrupted through violence and subversion. The Akalis are on the war path in Punjab where the extremists seem to have prevailed over the moderates thereby blocking a solution of the Punjab tangle. Communal disturbances in U.P., Gujarat, Bihar, Kerala and some other places were another distressing feature of the year under review. Political instability is surfacing again. Infeuding in the Congress-I has resulted in a change of governments in some of the States ruled by it and the toppling game is on in other Congress-I States. The Congress-I has lost its traditional strongholds of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka where regional forces came on top in the Assembly elections held earlier this month. There is renewed speculation about a mid-term Lok Sabha poll later this year and, with the Congress-I monolith cracking up, nobody can predict what the outcome will be. Corruption is rampant everywhere and the people seem to be getting cynically resigned to it.

All this was in the nature of an agonising reappraisal designed not to arouse despair but to bring about a new sense of dedication and determination to overcome the present difficulties and march ahead on the high road to peace, progress and prosperity. The need to raise the nation's sagging morale has been adequately stressed in President Zail Singh's traditional broadcast on the eve of Republic Day. He made a fervent appeal to the people to preserve and strengthen, by word and deed, the unity and cohesion of the country. "There is no achievement beyond our capacity if we stand united and determined", he said. Referring to the agitations in Punjab and Assam, the President warned: "Let us not fall prey to disruptive influences and weaken the nation's resolve to march ahead. Let us also not do anything which may frustrate the youth by diverting their energies from constructive channels." Much had been achieved since independence, he explained, and the fact that this had been done within the framework of democracy and against heavy odds was an eloquent testimony to the vitality and ability of the country's political and economic system. But the economy was yet to attain the tempo of self-sustaining growth and the co-operation of all was needed in this task. The President commended the success of the ninth Asian Games and the achievement of scientists and technologists in the second Antarctica expedition. He also referred to the non-aligned summit which the country will be hosting shortly. However formidable the challenges facing us today, there is not the slightest doubt that they can be met provided the nation remains strong and united. This was the theme of the President's address and one fervently hopes the nation will take it to heart.

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how can you say that. You
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ASKED to name the one single major political aberration in the thirty-five years of Indian independence the usual answer will probably be the emergency. Yet a strong, even decisive, contender is the period of three weeks following the resignation of the Janata government under Morarji Desai. An appropriate sub-title for this book would be "the twenty-one days that reduced Indian democracy to contempt and ignominy." This is a hard-focused study of what happened, of its implications that have still to be sorted out, and of the conclusions to which they seem to point. It assumes, on convincing grounds, that this incredible three-week happening is not so incredible as not to happen again and that next time its fallout could be even more shattering than it was in 1979.

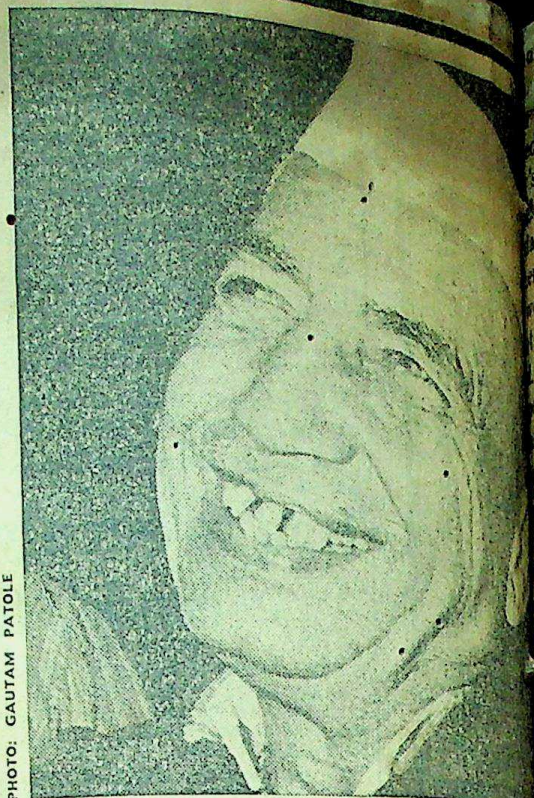
There has been a good deal of constitutional hair-splitting for and against the Presidential order dissolving the sixth Lok Sabha in August 1979. Despite this, as this book persuasively shows, the last word on what has developed into a highly contentious issue has been neither said nor found. Nor has there been any helpful clarification of the conventions by which a President can be guided in situations not specifically envisaged by the Constitution. The provisions of Article 74 defining the President's functions have not banished ambiguity, insofar as while it provides for a Council of Ministers to "aid and advise" the President "in the exercise of his functions" nowhere does it specify explicitly that he is bound by this advice. Whereas, moreover, in the discharge of his principal functions he is rendered functionless unless there is a ministry to advise him, not all his functions can logically be subject to ministerial advice.

When a President refers a matter back to the Council for reconsideration, withholds assent to a bill and returns it to Parliament for reconsideration, calls for information relating to some aspect of the administration, refers to the entire Council a decision taken by a single minister, or refers to the Election Commission any dispute concerning an M.P.'s qualifications he does so in consonance with various articles of the Constitution. These together add up to an area of Presidential discretion that qualifies the seeming absolutism of Article 74.

This area is much enlarged when account is taken of his oath of office which obliges the President "to the best of my ability" to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution" and "devote myself to the service and well-being of the people of India." This solemn affirmation is immediately drained of all validity if it is assumed that in the discharge of so fundamental a responsibility he is helplessly dependent on the advice of the ministry. Implicit in the Presidential pledge is an obligation involving the exercise of an independent judgment, and the limits within which this can be exercised will be determined by the circumstances. It is one of the principal contentions of this forceful book that these circumstances were "propitious" in the period between Morarji Desai's resignation and Mrs. Gandhi's restoration in January 1980.

The situation allowed for an upper limit to the Presidential discretion as well as for the esta-

PHOTO: GAUTAM PATOLE



Panting for prime ministerial "glory": Charan Singh

Democracy To A Farce

What should the President do if the advice he receives is patently inconsistent with the spirit of the Constitution?

by N. J. Nanporia

establishment of sound conventions. Yet in neither of these directions was an advance made, and none of the participants in the three-week drama emerged with any credit. The main elements of the situation consisted of the following: thirteen members of Janata including Raj Narain resigned and formed Janata (S); deputy Prime Minister Charan Singh thereupon also resigned, made himself leader of Janata (S) and announced his ability to form a successor government; Morarji Desai, having forfeited his majority and resigned also made an identical claim on the grounds that Janata remained the largest single party in the Lok Sabha; Y. B. Chavan, leader of the Opposition, was asked to form a government but failed; Charan Singh who had spoken of Mrs. Gandhi in the most opprobrious terms solicited her aid; dealing and double-dealing of unprecedented cynicism and irresponsibility ensued; Morarji Desai refused to relinquish his leadership of the Janata Parliamentary Party; the President asked Desai and Charan Singh to substantiate their claims; when the lists were received thirty-one names were found on both; various deputations and pressure groups called on the President; there was a figurative if not a physical counting of heads; on July 26 Charan Singh was summoned by a personal telephone call

from the President to form a government. "enjoyed the support of more members than Morarji Desai as leader of the Janata Parliamentary Party." The fall of the new government, expressed that the Opposition invited to try again, insisted that his resignation was not accepted. Janata was not called Bahuguna, agent and Bahuguna. Charan Singh, a "ranged person", fellow ministers, cabinet; internal contradictions soon emerged. Singh, faced by a crisis, to advise the President the Lok Sabha. On the point, Singh, a prime minister of a party should not form a government even be seen as a minister there with the authority. Presidential discretion seriously misused. The issue of disallowance should be the possibility of recommending himself as a candidate. That is, indeed, the conclusion that the President should draw.

THE CONSTITUTION M. V. Pyle (ed.) House, Rs. 50/-

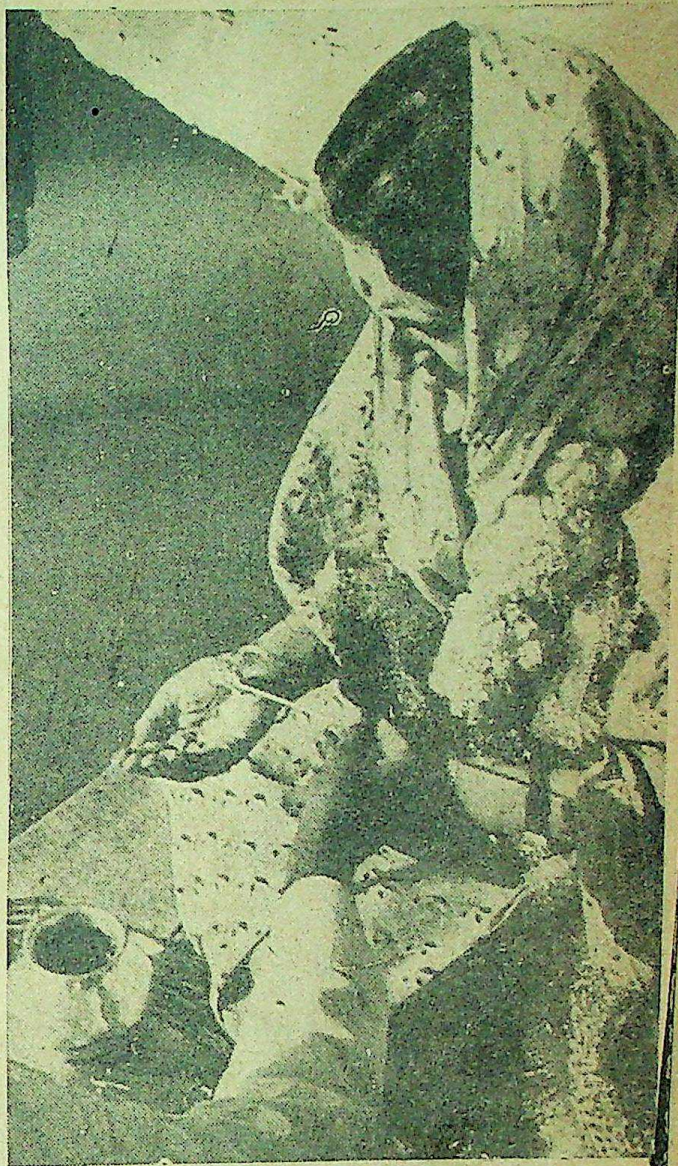
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September 11—
weeks before that
Wednesday of
last — I have in
her for the last
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"Aap bhi mere
?" (Will you
me?), she asks.
Singh, I shall walk
in my car, I reply.

I shall not go by
walk to the other
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of her. I stand
I see her go past
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villages. That is
I finally struck.

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lived. She was made that way. And
work was far from accomplished. In
a new and formidable threat to the coun
unity and integrity had emerged. But it
as if she was beginning to want to call it
ay. She certainly gave me that impression
I met her last on September 11.

It would obviously be an exaggeration to say
she had a premonition of the approaching
Despite her belief in astrology, it does not
in retrospect that she was aware of, and
to, the dire predictions that had been
about her. But her behaviour appeared to be
character. She was not the Indira Gandhi
known for almost two decades.

was not on the defensive. She was not
ative. She spoke of her government's record
of the Congress party as if it was in the
health. But she said all that smiling. She
to be more at peace with herself than
I ever seen her before.

aware that behind the public fare lived a
different Indira Gandhi. Her charming pri
face was in evidence that afternoon. But
was something more to it. The lonely sensi
Indira who could be easily hurt was now
ground. Nor was the Indira who would visit
temple after another and one guru after an
as if in a desperate search for something
ould cling to. The person I was meeting had
her peace and was ready to say goodbye.

Gandhi was a person of many moods.
what I am speaking about was no more
a passing mood. But it did not look that
to me. I felt uneasy and said so to my col
Her subsequent speeches strengthened
pression. There was no rancour in them
opposition parties. She had gone out of
to reassure Pakistan. The "warrior
as *The Economist*, London, has described
was not wanting to remain embattled for
at least it seemed to me.

That is where I have a last
glimpse of her.

THE interview that had gone on
for well over two hours. It
was to be part of a series of
films—a quarter—based on inter
views with her. The theme was
hum aur humara desh. The films
were to be scheduled for release
on her birthday. The interview
was to be of 20 minutes dura
tion—one of the four. We (four
interviewers) were allocated dif
ferent subjects, different places,
different timing. Mrs Gandhi talk
ed to me at 1 Akbar Road for
two hours, leisurely, calmly.
smilingly. She had many engage
ments for the day. Yet she made
it appear as if she was in no
hurry.

I return to my office in New
Delhi. How did it go? What did
she have to say? How was she?
I am asked by my colleagues.
These are the usual questions we

And then she adds: "But what
does it matter now. There is
hardly any time left. One has
come to the last stage."

How can you say that. You
look wonderfully fit. All of us,
whatever our age, feel
and spent in your presence.

have asked one another when
ever anyone of us had met her.

This time I had come back
with a strange feeling. The
vague, inexplicable feeling that
she had sounded different. I try
to spell it out. She was in a
different mood. Not sad. No, not
pensive, not depressed, nor dis
missive of questions. She was
smiling, cheerful, pleasant, com
municative. But there was some
thing in her manner, something
about her mood, something she
said which gave me the impres
sion as if she was getting ready
to opt out. There was a serenity
about her which was disconcert
ing. A strange calmness seemed
to have descended on her. I had
been left feeling uneasy.

Is she planning to retire, we
wondered.

12.30 p.m. is the time for the
interview. Mulk

Raj Anand, Prem Kapoor, the
producer of the film, and I
wait for her outside 1 Akbar
Road. She would come in a car,
we are told by the security staff.
So there is no question of film
ing her walk in with me as the
producer desired. But just then
we see her come walking, briskly
as usual from 1 Safdarjung to

Question: But your part
gether, they are constan
Mrs Gandhi: That is no
to work together. No, I
thing in the party). WF
after him. But Shastri
mously. Similarly, I feel
today. (Excerpt from t

wards us. We go up to the vic
ket gate and greet her. The ca
mera begins clicking as she and
I walk towards 1 Akbar Road.
She is a few minutes late. She
hastens to explain why. The
make-up people had taken un
duly long. "I hope they have
not put too much on," she smiles
and asks.

Not at all, it looks very nice.
I assure her. She is wearing a
pretty bright red sari.

We have come in to the room.
"Where do I sit?", she asks me.
I had seen the arrangements
being made. I show her the sofa
that had been arranged for her.
"Then you better give me those

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The Hong Kong S

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the space age in 1980
forced to come back,
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poverty, starvation and
growing population. In
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India's past.

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Osservatore

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Some of the tributes paid to the late Prime Minister by the world press.

THE Sikhs who slew Indira Gandhi may have killed more than the person. They may have killed her concept of India the nation. She was the latest casualty in the bitter sectarian strife that is threatening to rend asunder a nation founded and forged on bloodshed.

The Hong Kong Standard

ALTHOUGH Mrs Gandhi succeeded in leading India into the nuclear age in 1974 and into the space age in 1980, she was forced to come back, again and again, to the age-old problems of intercommunal strife, caste, poverty, starvation and an exploding population. In the end it was the volatile religious issue that was believed to have brought her assassination, an echo from India's past.

The Bangkok Post

IN Poland, Father Popieluszko is dead, assassinated by those who hatch hatred and sow injustice. In India, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi has fallen victim to an attack perpetrated after months of violence and disorder that have left thousands of victims. In Chile, in South Africa and in other countries demonstrations of popular protest have been repressed with bloodshed. The 1980s are truly the years of violence, a violence unworthy of man, a violence that humiliates humanity.

Osservatore Romano

THIS is a murder which strikes at the head and the heart. It alters the way we think and the way we act. It is more than the murder of one political leader, one adversary, one figure in the turmoil of her times. It is more than the work of an isolated zealot with access to a gun. The killing of Mahatma Gandhi was a deeply mourned event but one which seemed to belong intimately to the working out of Indian history in that dramatic era. The murder of John F. Kennedy was a dramatic event, by somebody clearly alien to the American political system, but it was fragmented and it was an aberration. The murder of Indira Gandhi is an event of a different and more substantial order because — and the words — it was almost almost routine, almost an almost expediency. It adds to the accumulating evidence that the democratic method itself is open to assassination — in India, yes, but also in any country in which is attached to the same

The Guardian

THERE was a remarkable similarity between the three popu-

larity, are the cohesion and confidence she lent to India in years of mostly stable, mostly

in politics one has to work doubly hard to show one is not merely a daughter but is also a person in her own right."

She added, "of course, being a



At the 1963 women's carnival in Delhi.

list leaders of the subcontinent over the past decade. Their language, rhetoric and personal charm were, in many ways, the product of social circumstances which they attempted to master. Bhutto was hanged by General Zia; Sheikh Mujib was shot dead by young army officers; and now Mrs Gandhi has fallen in a hail of assassin's bullets. Khalistan, the slogan for a separate Sikh state, may well have been the dream of the romantic or disgruntled, but it is the more sinister elements who have scored the

The Economist

HOWEVER vague her destinations may have seemed, Mrs

wake of her controversial decision to have the Indian army root out Sikh extremists at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the Sikhs' holiest shrine, she had glanced at

big hit.

Earlier this year I had a lengthy discussion with Mrs Gandhi. It was an "off-the-record" interview designed to last 15 minutes. It went on for two hours. She was relaxed, witty, and frank about the scale of the problems that confronted her administration. The biggest problem was "regionalism". "Outside forces," she said, were determined to weaken India because of its nonaligned stance. Hence they were encouraging separatism. This was, for her, the most immediate dan-

and Tribune

earlier, when I asked if she regarded in the controversial decision to have the Indian army root out Sikh extremists at the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the Sikhs' holiest shrine, she had glanced at

tion"

ant Singh and said, "when I see Sikhs like this around me, I don't believe I have anything to fear."

It was typical of the proud, born, courageous Indira Gandhi that she hated to wear a bulletproof vest and rarely agreed to do so. Certainly she was a realist.

Like the father of modern India, Mahatma Gandhi, Indira Gandhi died in a tranquil New Delhi garden, a victim of her country's turbulent politics.

Five days before her death, Indira Gandhi was talking with a foreign visitor about the problems of her country. She did mention the Sikh problem by name, but she spoke of the need for India to "transcend its divisions" and fight off the fanaticism on every side.

"I am frequently attacked," she said. "But I'm not afraid." That was the kind of woman who died a week later, not afraid, only surrounded at the men who shot her while she was greeting them in her room.

Time

Indian commentators look back on Mrs Gandhi's years in power, they reach for words like "determination", "tenacity", "grit" and "idealism". Her specific contributions to India are somehow as more nebulous; her great accomplishment seems to be by dint of personality she led the turbulent country together.

The New York Times

For many people, Mrs Gandhi reflected the dichotomy of modern and progressive, traditional, mysterious and enigmatic.

She was the patron of India's space research and admirer of western technology, one who often listened to the pundits, or learned men, once postponed her swearing-in ceremony as Prime Minister because the day was considered inauspicious by astrologers.

Los Angeles Times

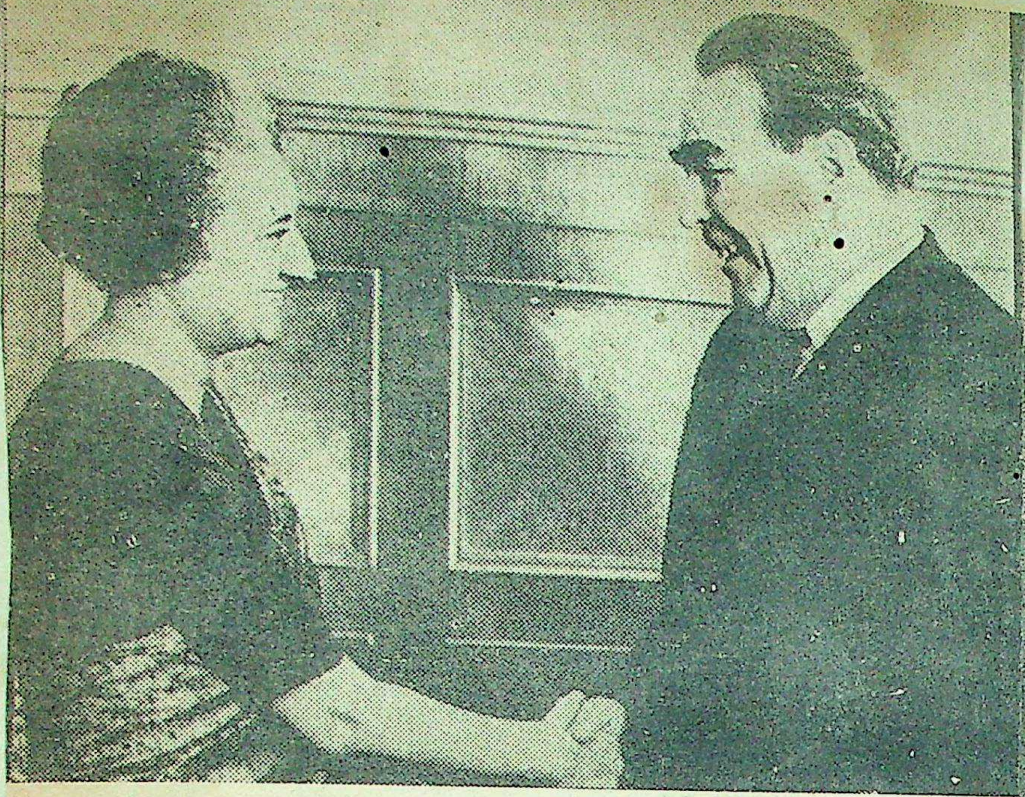
AS GANDHI'S blood moulded, she hoped it would contribute to growth, not fear or death. Southall and in-

was not a politician, a skilled administrator inherited from her father, a tolerance of intolerant fanaticism, in good stead, relief in state intervention. The biggest problem was the economy. Partition. "Outside forces," she said, were determined to weaken India because of its nonaligned stance. Hence they were encouraging separatism. This was, for her, the most immediate dan-

The Times

to persuade Indira Gandhi to talk about herself. She was the least pretentious, the least egotistical of political leaders; almost a different breed. She wanted to discuss the way the world was going, to pursue an argument, to shun personalities.

Michael Foot in the Observer



Mrs Gandhi with Brezhnev at the Kremlin.

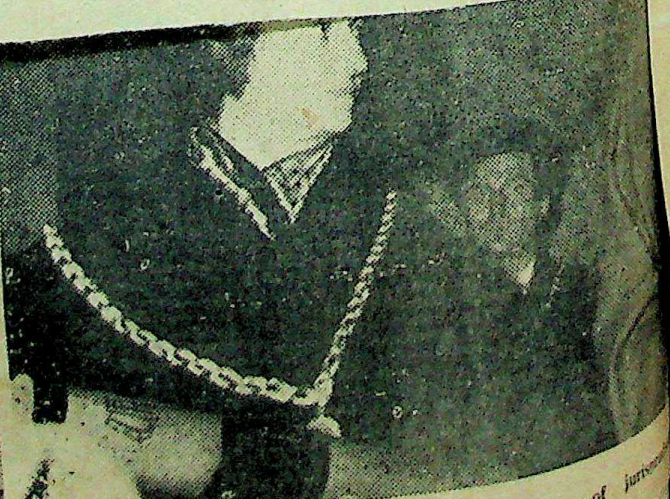


With Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in Dacca.

With Margaret Thatcher in New Delhi.



With Mr and Mrs John Foster Dulles of the U.S.



Receiving the honorary degree of doctor of jurisprudence

Crisis

Da

THE chain of events leading to the violence in different parts of the country has culminated in the assassination of Mrs Gandhi. She died for India's freedom and her passing away signals the nation's history. The possibility of the great tasks that the nation has dedicated do not of her untimely death forward with renewed hope but not for the well-being of the active and rational people: it is the fact whether we will freedoms or drift what.

No event in history but is woven into the developments. With time the emotional assassination and to lift. Hence it is necessary to have a hard look at the changing socio-political must know the task of the leaders and the less important, to understand the role of the citizens must be to sustain the nation to a better quality of citizens.

Socio-Political

It is well to bear in mind that the most difficult crisis is not from success rather than failure. It may be termed crisis which require radical policies as well as had led to the success. There is reluctance of the leaders and the policies that produce. But they forget that their own problems and conditions need new great leader. Winston led the nation to victory. It was voted outwards. It showed the British electorate returned to office it might have been try if he had politics.

During the past the end of World War II the confidence of the country soon thereafter. It was radically in mass whose experience stretch to the visualise the vast has taken place not mean that the economic and social diminished since the assessment of the independence re- tive as well as no

Crisis Of Change And Success

Dangers Of Ignoring People

By SURINDAR SURI

THE chain of events of growing social unrest, lawlessness and violence in different parts of the country has culminated in the dastardly assassination of Mrs Indira Gandhi. Mrs Gandhi died for India as she had lived for it. She, like Mahatma Gandhi, is a martyr to the cause of India's freedom and unity. Her tragic passing away signals a turning point in the nation's history. It is now the responsibility of citizens to ensure that the great tasks to which her life was dedicated do not suffer as a result of her untimely death but are carried forward with renewed vigour.

The insane killings that preceded and followed Mrs Gandhi's assassination took many innocent lives. In some places the mob violence was stemmed by the good sense and determination of the citizens. Thus, there is reason for hope but not for passive optimism. The well-being of the nation requires active and rational participation of the people: it is the factor that determines whether we will strengthen our freedoms or drift into God knows what.

No event in history remains isolated but is woven into the mesh of social developments. With the passage of time the emotional trauma of the assassination and the killings begins to lift. Hence it is necessary now to take a hard look at the country's rapidly changing socio-political realities. We must know the tasks facing the political leaders and the administration. No less important, however, we must understand the responsibilities that the citizens must discharge if the nation is to sustain its march forward to a better quality of life for all citizens.

Socio-Political Realities

It is well to bear in mind that the most difficult crises are those that arise from success rather than failure. These may be termed crises of fulfilment and which require radical shifts in the policies as well as administration that had led to the successes. Understandably, there is reluctance on the part of leaders and the elite to question policies that produced good results. But they forget that progress creates its own problems and changed conditions need new policies. Britain's great leader Winston Churchill, who led the nation to victory in World War II, was voted out of office soon afterwards. It showed political maturity of the British electorate. Churchill was returned to office some years later, but it might have been better for his country if he had retired from active politics.

During the past four decades since the end of World War II and independence of the country that followed soon thereafter, India has changed radically in many respects. Those whose experience and memories stretch to the pre-war period can visualise the vast transformation that has taken place in public life. It does not mean that the changes have been for the better in all respects, nor that economic and social disparities have diminished sufficiently. A correct assessment of the developments after independence requires that their positive as well as negative aspects should

be taken into account. Some critics maintain that almost all changes are for the better, others hold that these have been for the worse; still others argue that virtually nothing has changed. There is some truth in all these assertions but the focus of our attention should be the over-all situation.

Positive achievements of the nation include growth of the industrial sector, a significant increase in the number of educated young men and women, and rise of political consciousness among the people. Recognising that progress generates its own problems, the critical issues facing the nation today is to develop ways and means of utilising the progress achieved so far to tackle poverty, illiteracy, social backwardness as well as the problem of educated unemployment. The first, second and third worlds are generally associated in the global perspective with the highly industrialised and the economically backward nations respectively. But the equivalents of all of these worlds exist within India.

Imperative

It is imperative that the industrially and socio-economically advanced segments of the Indian nation do not become self-centered and egoistical like nations of the first world that are concerned only with their own well-being or, at best, take an attitude of charity towards the third world. Instead, the policies and administrative structures that have helped to generate the industrial, educational and social developments in India should now be restructured so that talent, skills and resources are directed to the development of the backward and neglected segments of our society. In fact, such was the strategy of economic development adopted at the time when planning was initiated in the early fifties. At the time, it was decided that an advanced industrial sector must be created even at the cost of neglecting the poorer sections of society. But there was a clear commitment that the advanced sector, when it had matured, would be utilised to make up for the neglect of and sacrifices made by the people. Such a reorientation of programmes and policies is now called for. It requires a radical change in the attitude and approaches, if not of personnel, of the political and administrative elites. If a radical shift does not take place soon enough, we may witness inside India the equivalent of the arms race now being played on the world stage by the great powers. With it they seek to becloud their own bad conscience. The arms race within India would exacerbate social tensions and provoke lawlessness and terrorism. Already, the communal riots are of the nature of a covert civil war.

Economic development as well as progress of education, social welfare etc., have altered the material aspects of the people's lives but no less have the affected religious beliefs, attitudes towards authority, and mass psychology in general. Social life becomes ever more dynamic. It lends greater intensity to the inter-relations and interactions between different spheres of public life including the economic, the

political and the religious. The area of the government's direct control is secular but one cannot ignore the reality that secular activities impinge ever more strongly upon non-secular ones, such as religious beliefs and practices, traditional observances.

The common people cannot be expected on their own to readjust beliefs and practices to the changing material and social conditions. In India, the government is the major agent of economic and social development; hence it is held responsible also for the crises of religious beliefs and traditional values. If political leaders and administrative officers do not show an active concern for these problems of the masses, they will be regarded as callous and supercilious.

Especially critical is the situation of educated youths today, caught as they are between different worlds and mutually irreconcilable eras. They are educated in a westernised rationalistic intellectual framework but get alienated from the social environment and heritage. Educated young men and women are often doomed to unemployment creating a sense of hysteria in their minds. They are expected to pay massive bribes in order to get jobs in government service or elsewhere. Yet they are expected to follow the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi and their own religious teachings. No wonder that some of the present-day saints themselves go berserk. Educated young men and women wish to enter the society of the affluent but short of emigrating to countries of the first world, the doors of affluence are shut for most of them. Yet they are unable to revert to the life of their elders which is too austere and unexciting, if not obsolescent.

Fanaticism

In this situation, fanaticism appeals to some. They vent their bitterness and frustration upon those whom they expected to provide guidance but who have failed to do so. Writers and journalists who fell to the assassins' bullets symbolised the nation's intelligentsia that has failed in its responsibility to provide guidance to the youth of the nation.

The people cannot be taken for granted now that they have become self-aware. Political leaders are elected by their votes and their participation in mass demonstrations is an important part of the political process in the country. If the people are not involved in public life constructively they may seek to assert themselves by destructive acts. Heaven forbid that they should get a charismatic leader like Mussolini or Hitler to guide them; the only assurance can be provided by the intelligentsia and the elite if they outgrow their self-centredness and learn to grapple with the rapidly shifting social reality. Let not India become a victim of its own progress as did Italy, Germany and other nations when they were faced with similar crises of fulfilment. We must act now in order to avoid getting caught in the domestic arms race. The knowledge of other societies as of our own is there to guide our policies and action for strengthening democracy and achieving further progress.

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A Thought for The Week

The main part of intellectual education is not the acquisition of facts but learning how to make facts live.
— OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Universities And Change

In a country that has the world's largest number of illiterates, it would be considered unrealistic to worry over-much about university education. It must, however, be remembered that the products of our universities, though they are an infinitesimal percentage of our population, constitute the ruling elite. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance to consider the role played by our universities.

It is customary for members of the older generation to claim that once upon a time our universities turned out graduates whose mental horizons were widened because of the liberal education they had received. They bemoan the all-round fall in standards today brought about presumably by the increase in the number of educational institutions and of students.

The sad fact is our universities have played only a marginal role in our affairs. Today they are more than ever isolated from the realities of the country and the education they impart is largely irrelevant to the life of the nation. The observation has frequently been made that our universities are nothing more than examining bodies. But even in this job they have of late failed. Bombay University recently drafted an IAS official to organise the conduct of examinations. Examinations have apparently become an executive rather than an academic affair.

As centres of learning the real purpose of a university is to generate new thinking and new ideas. It has the responsibility to produce men and women who can provide leadership and who are capable of changing society. Look at our universities? Where is in them the excitement of discovery, the play of ideas, the germination of new thought? Have our universities contributed to the growth of the nation?

The most tragic aspect of our universities is that being static bodies they can hardly be instruments for change. They represent the waste in our education. The majority of our B.A.s and M.A.s and M.Sc.s become bank clerks, babus in the secretariat. Most of them are in jobs that are totally unrelated to their education. They are happy that they are in some job—that is the second tragedy of our education.

F. Champion Ward says of the University of Chicago: "For me... the University of Chicago has remained the place where you will be asked one more question than elsewhere, where tweeds and courtesy never stand in the way of disagreement, where intellect, as the entertainment of possibilities, and intelligence, as the attempt to realize them, set the tone of the community; in short, where theory is taken seriously and made the measure of practice..."

If our universities are to become the founts of new ideas and change, they must become more free, more open, more creative.

(Continued from page 1, Vol. 2)

him to be hostile to his work. "It was my fate to be the antagonist of a man for whom even then I had the highest respect", Smuts said in a tribute to Gandhi included in Radhakrishnan's *Mahatma Gandhi: Essays and Reflections on his Life and Work* (p. 253). And he too discovered a Christ in Gandhi when he said: "The Suffering Servant of Isaiah and the Great Sufferer on the Cross, pouring out his soul for his brothers, stir emotions whose dynamic is incomparably greater than that of all reason and rational persuasion". (p. 256).

The West may be losing its Christian spirit but it has the advantage of approaching Gandhi in terms of the Cross which has still the power of a myth. We are doomed to worship Gandhi through our laws banning liquor and beef.

The first great European Christian to understand and appreciate Gandhi was Tolstoy. After reading Gandhi's *Indian Home Rule* Tolstoy wrote to Gandhi on May 8, 1910: "I have read your book with great interest because I think the question you have therein dealt with is important not only for Indians, but for the whole of mankind". (Kalidas Nag, ed., *Tolstoy and Gandhi*, 1950, p. 67.)

In his letter to Gandhi, dated September 7, 1910, Tolstoy wrote: "Your work in Transvaal, which seems to be far away from the centre of the world, is yet the most fundamental and the most important to us supplying the most weighty practical proof in which the world can now share and with which must participate not only the Christians but all the peoples of the world". (Tolstoy and Gandhi, p. 74.)

How many in India had any idea of the world significance of Gandhi's work in South Africa in 1910?

What impression did Gandhi make on the educated classes in Britain during his career in South Africa? The most significant British opinion of Gandhi at the time was that of Gilbert Murray, the great Hellenist who was then Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford. In an article in *Hibbert Journal* (1914), Murray wrote about Gandhi: "Persons in power should be very careful how they deal with a man who cares nothing for sensual pleasure, nothing for riches, nothing for comfort or praise or promotion, but is simply determined to do what he believes to be right. He is a dangerous and uncomfortable enemy, because his body which you can always conquer, gives you little purchase upon his soul".

Our three universities in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were then fifty-seven years old and yet we would search in vain for an Indian professor of Sanskrit or of any subject, making such a noble statement on a noble soul. Gilbert Murray was one of the most influential apologists of Gandhi and his death in the West.

Twenty-five years later Murray called Gandhi a symbol of "spiritual authority" in a tri-

bute contributed to Radhakrishnan's *Mahatma Gandhi* where he said: "From a distant country, from a quite alien civilization, with different views from his on many practical questions, out of the careworn and striving movements of thought in Europe, where the human conscience and intellect seem for the moment to stand helpless under the bludgeons and of ignorance and brute force, I gladly give this great man the title his disciples claim for him and hail with reverence 'Mahatma Gandhi'" (p. 183).

During World War I the conscientious objectors' pacifist movement in Britain was profoundly influenced by the Gandhian ideal of non-violence and passive resistance. If the pamphlets issued by the No-Conscription Fellowship, National Council of Civil Liberties and the League of Peace and Freedom do not specifically mention Gandhi it is mostly because at that time there was not much literature on Gandhi readily available for their writers.

Bertrand Russell begins his

son breeds reason". Russell says in the paper (p. 8) and he ends with a sentence which one could put in the mouth of Gandhi without a change.

It is not, however, improbable that the British conscientious objectors did not invoke

the voice of a Frenchman only; it was the voice of Western Europe of the time uttering a benediction on an Asian idealist who wanted a moral and spiritual freedom. Welcoming that

GANDHI

Gandhi's pacifist ideals in their repudiation of the war because Gandhi was known to be a supporter of that war. Obviously the No-Conscription Fellowship had knowledge of Gandhi's letter to the Under-Secretary of State for India offering co-operation with Britain's war effort and Lord Crewe's acceptance of that offer.

But soon after World War I and particularly in the twenties, Gandhi and his doc-

Rolland said: "Gandhi like our European revolutionaries, a mere maker of laws and decrees. He is the voice of a new Humanity".

Later, authorities on the Russian Revolution attempted to relate Gandhian ideas to revolution in studies like *Gandhi Through Soviet Eyes* (1971). But Gandhi's revolution is as different from the Russian as his ideal of non-violence is from the ideal of Karl

At the beginning of War II, however, there was a fresh examination in the light of the principles of resistance and their application to a particular political situation. When the war broke out on September 3, 1939, Mahatma had just completed his seventieth year and was on the occasion the foremost intellectual of the West sent their greetings through Radhakrishnan who put in his *Mahatma Gandhi*.

Albert Einstein called Gandhi "a beacon to the generation" (p. 75). Gerald R. Ford said about his non-violence it was "the one valid and link between all the peoples of mankind". (p. 82). Lord Housman called him "a beacon light for the world to all nations and races in the struggle for liberty". C. E. M. Joad said that Gandhi's "authority in the world is though unbacked by force greater than that of any man". (p. 145). Count Tolstoy greeted him as an ideal of "India's tradition of a saint" and "the most modern type of leader".

But grave questions about the universal validity of Gandhi's non-violence and passive resistance were raised by the Nazi regime. The very beginning of the war saw the publication of an article in *The New York Times* (November 26, 1938) in which Gandhi counselled the German people to adopt his principle of non-violence in the face of Nazi persecution. Buber, the existentialist philosopher, then in Jerusalem, published an answer to Gandhi's advice on November 24, 1939. "Do you think Mahatma, what a concern for the world is and what a camp is there?" asked Buber. He argued that "the word non-violence means testimony; but if there is no one there to witness the testimony, it is like a word in the desert". Leifer, *India and the World*, 1971, pp. 254-55.

Later Georg Jentsch on this controversy that the dispute between these great minds, Gandhi

(Handwritten note: Ronis 1/10/10)
(Handwritten note: Jaganmala Tolstoy Apr 25 1910 May 1)
 Dear friend:
 I just received your letter and your book: "Indian Home Rule".
 I read your book with great interest because I think that the question you treat in it: the passive resistance —, is a question of the greatest importance not only for India but for the whole humanity.
 I could not find your former letter, but came.

Tolstoy's letter to Gandhi.

paper *The Philosophy of Pacifism* read at the Conference upon the Pacifist Philosophy of Life held in London on July 8 and 9, 1915, with Tagore's poem in the English *Gitanjali* — "Where the mind is without fear" but does not mention Gandhi's experiments with passive resistance. But the paper is a Gandhian paper from beginning to end. "Violence breeds violence, and rea-

trine and practice of passive resistance became an important moral concern amongst the intellectuals of the West. Gandhi's Non-cooperation Movement began on August 1, 1920, and soon after appeared M. S. Maurice's *The Ethics of Passive Resistance* (2nd ed., 1921) and in 1923 was published Romain Rolland's *Mahatma Gandhi: A Study in Indian Nationalism*. The voice of Rolland was not

Pitfalls Of Accommodation

By GIRI AL JAIN

Pitfalls Of Accommodation

By GIRULAL JAIN

Rajiv Gandhi in India. The year opened with his installation as Prime Minister following an unprecedented electoral victory in independent India's history and it closed with the Congress centenary celebrations in Bombay over which he presided. In between, he took a series of decisions which could leave no room for doubt that he was fully in command of the country's affairs. He has, for example, been personally responsible for the accords with the Akalis in Punjab and the student agitators in Assam.

The ease with which Mr Rajiv Gandhi has maintained his ascendancy in the Congress Party and the country in his first year has, to the best of our knowledge, only one parallel. Mahatma Gandhi had taken over the Congress as it were, by storm at the end of World War I. But the Mahatma had won his laurels in South Africa much earlier; he was a formidable political figure in terms of both experience and reputation by the time he arrived in India; above all, the Indian elite was restless. It was waiting for a leader who could preside over the next more radical phase of the struggle for freedom. The Mahatma was precisely that kind of leader.

Radical Phase

Mr Rajiv Gandhi's ascendancy cannot be so easily explained. As he himself admits, his political career does not go back beyond 1981. Earlier, he was not even interested in politics either in terms of ideas or activities. Both bored him. His performance under his mother's stewardship either as an M.P. or party general secretary was, by all accounts, unspectacular. Indeed, he and his close aides, then (and now) cannot in fairness disclaim all responsibility for some of the obviously wrong decisions in 1984 such as the dismissal of Dr Farooq Abdullah and Mr N.T. Ram Rao as chief ministers of Jammu and Kashmir and Andhra, and in fact for the events leading to "Operation Bluestar." Mr Rajiv Gandhi was involved in the abortive secret negotiations with the Akalis.

We of course, have the popular explanation. Which is that Mrs Indira Gandhi's brutal assassination ensured Mr Rajiv Gandhi's succession to her as well as his sweeping electoral victory. There is considerable merit in this proposition. There was a wave of sympathy for him in the wake of his mother's tragic death. More important, the pent-up fear of chaos and anarchy in the Indian psyche came to the fore on October 31, 1984. The people desperately looked for a figure who could maintain order and they opted for Mrs Indira Gandhi's son in the absence of an obviously more commanding figure.

This explanation speaks more for the dwarfish size of other Congress leaders than for the popular response to Mrs Indira Gandhi's sudden death. The people in fact did not have a choice since no senior cabinet minister was willing even to press his claim to be sworn in as the acting Prime Minister so that the Congress Parliamentary Party could have an opportunity to meet and properly elect its new leader. The senior Congress leaders were afraid that they would be misunderstood if they suggested that the well-established convention in this regard be respected. They were not prepared to take the risk. Thus, fear guided them as much as it guided

The contrast between the popular mood in 1919 and 1984 could not have been sharper. In 1919, the people were looking for a general who could lead them in the coming battles with the British. In 1984, they were looking for a ruler who could relieve them of the anxieties and fears which were haunting them. Mr Rajiv Gandhi has fulfilled that role.

As a reflection of the loose structure of the Indian personality and psyche, Indian nationalism is by definition accommodative rather than combative. By and large, its exponents seek accommodation and avoid fights. Mrs Indira Gandhi was a rare exception and this fact did not add to her popularity. Even the victory over Pakistan and the creation of an independent Bangladesh under her leadership in 1971 were soon forgotten and not many Indians remember her either for the integration of Sikkim into the Indian Union in 1976 or for the underground nuclear explosion in 1974. Her concern for the larger national interest, as she understood it, prevented her from reaching accords in Assam and Punjab on the terms available to her. But she did not earn the nation's gratitude for it. Despite "Operation Bluestar", her electoral prospects in October 1984 were less than promising.

This should help elucidate the true nature of Mr Rajiv Gandhi's mandate in December 1984. On the face of it, he won on a sympathy and an anti-Akali vote. But it was not an endorsement of Mrs Indira Gandhi's anti-Akali platform. If anything, the reverse was true. This distinction needs to be grasped if we are to understand the factors behind Mr Rajiv Gandhi's popularity.

General Mandate

Facts speak for themselves. If the people had elected him on an anti-Akali platform, he would have forfeited his popularity when he not only reached an accord with Sant Longowal on terms Mrs Indira Gandhi had personally found unacceptable, but also virtually handed over Punjab to the Akalis and indeed celebrated it as a victory for the nation. Even so, it is necessary to look behind the facts. The conclusion is uncomfortable but it is inescapable. Indian nationalism is weak.

Assam did not impinge on the Indian mind as Punjab did for a variety of reasons. The agitators in Assam did not threaten the country's unity; they did not engage in terrorism in pursuit of their demands; and the Congress ministry headed by Mr Saikia had managed to produce an order of sorts. Mr Rajiv Gandhi could therefore have put off an agreement there if he had so chosen. He did not so choose, perhaps because he failed to work out the implications of his decision carefully.

The general mandate was the same as in the case of Punjab—an early settlement with the agitators. But the composition of the people to be adversely affected by an agreement in Assam was different from that in Punjab. In Punjab, the adversely affected people were to be the Hindus who were not interested in a fight with the Akalis and, indeed, were willing to accept Akali rule for the sake of peace which would enable them to carry on their business. In Assam, the adversely affected people were to be mainly the Muslim immigrants who would never accept an arrangement which placed political power in the hands of the Assamese Hindus whom they did not trust.

able. Anyone with any political acumen and experience could have told Mr Rajiv Gandhi that an accord in Assam would lose him the Bengali-speaking people's vote in that state that it would adversely affect the party's fortunes in West Bengal where it would alienate both the Hindus and the Muslims, and that it would cost him Muslim support in other parts of the country as well.

It is not possible to say either how much of the Muslim vote the Assam accord has cost Mr Rajiv Gandhi in the rest of India or whether it will come back to him in view of the absence of an alternative banner to which the Muslims can rally. But that apart, he has, broadly speaking, lived by the mandate the people gave him a year ago.

It is equally difficult to say whether he will go ahead with the proposed treaty with Pakistan and thus give president Zia-ul-Haq all the advantages he has been seeking for the last five years. But if he does, that will be another feather in his leather-studded crown. A treaty with Pakistan will be warmly received by the articulate sections who are desperately anxious to believe that they face no danger from anywhere.

Primordial Ways

Pakistan may spring a surprise on Mr Rajiv Gandhi as China did on his grand father first in 1962 when it attacked India and then in 1964 when it exploded the bomb and placed itself in a different power league. But that does not worry Mr Gandhi's supporters. They yearn to return to their primordial ways. They want to turn their back on the world and immerse themselves in their small little worlds. For all the talk of change, India has not changed all that much in the deepest recesses of its psyche.

There is unfortunately for Mr Rajiv Gandhi a pretty big catch in all this. The catch is that his approach will deny him a nationalist platform on the strength of which alone he can call upon the people in various parts of the subcontinent to overcome their petty loyalties and rally to his banner. Of necessity, he has to carry such a banner since no other banner is available to him.

Implicit in most of our discussions is the assumption that India has become a nation. This is a false assumption, though India is also not a mere congeries of diverse groups barely held together by the state. India is a nation-in-becoming. That is why the nationalist platform has an appeal but an appeal that has to overcome other particularistic appeals. A nationalist leader must be combative precisely because Indian nationalism is so accommodating.

Ironically, but not surprisingly, the forces of communalism, regionalism and casteism have grown as the process of integration has gathered momentum. Not surprisingly because there is a relationship between them. As the traditional India of small loyalties gives way to the forces of modernisation, the search for identity intensifies and expresses itself in caste, religious and linguistic idioms. These are adversary-partners of nationalism. They cannot be defeated but they must be contained if India is to become a nation. While Mrs Indira Gandhi's actions spoke of an awareness of this need even though she might not have grasped the point intellectually, Mr Rajiv Gandhi's approach does not. It is conglomerative and not integrative and is bound to fail.

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A black and white portrait of a man with a long white beard and a dark turban, wearing a light-colored kurta. He is seated and looking slightly to the left. The image is grainy and appears to be a reproduction from a book.

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In a joint statement, the two religious leaders described the killing as a "most unfortunate and cowardly act on the part of the

AICC member, Harcharan Singh Josh, in a statement in New Delhi,

A pillar of freedom struggle

JAGJIVAN RAM was probably one of the last leaders of the generation who had fought for the country's freedom.

Acknowledged as the disputed leader of the Scheduled Castes, Ram's egalitarian instincts, his bitter experience in his youth at the hands of the so-called higher caste led him to clashes with the establishment even when he presented it.

A champion of the rights of Scheduled Castes from his school days, Ram plunged into active politics in his early '20s and rose to become a minister at the Centre when he was only 38.

Popularly known as Babuji, Ram was born in April 10 1908, to a village cobbler of Shahabad district in north Bihar, his parents being of moderate means, he did not have a difficult childhood, but he did face discrimination of another sort.

An incident at school throws light on his grit and tenacity. He refused to accept a freeship as an untouchable, but worked hard and earned it on the basis of merit.

After a brief spell of schooling in his village, Ram moved to the Arrah town school where he was soon made aware of the hideous aspects of untouchability. Some caste Hindu boys refused to drink water out of an earthen pitcher touched by him. Ram, however, smashed the separate pitcher provided for him to pieces and, after a while, won his point.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya recognised the young Jagjivan Ram's potential when he heard him read a welcome address at a meeting in Arrah, and invited him to join the B.Sc. class at Banaras Hindu University.

But here again Jagjivan Ram was seared by the fires of prejudice. He sensed antagonism everywhere. Servants would not wash his plates. A barber once discovered his caste and left him half-shaved. To crown it all, he had to quit the hostel. These experience saddened him.

Outside the hostel's sheltered walls Jagjivan Ram became aware

of the Hindu reformist movement and became, for the first time, committed to change the social order.

Meanwhile, Calcutta with its depressed masses beckoned. After passing the inter science examination, he rushed to that city and joined the B.Sc. class in Calcutta University.

Here Ram was not content merely to study, but moved about, talked, listened to the views of great reformers, set up organisations and began several movements for depressed groups. He also attended Congress meetings, kept abreast of political thinking and, most of all, read a lot. It was in Calcutta that he came into touch with great leaders of the like Dr B.C. Roy and Netaji Bose.

In 1933 Dr Rajendra Prasad took him to the office of the Bihar Congress straight from a meeting. Dr Prasad had been greatly impressed by the young man's speech and enrolled him in the Congress. Soon Ram became president of the all-India depressed classes league. A nationalist first, he was able to thwart a move at the all-religious conference at Lucknow in 1936 to set Harijans against other Hindus.

Ram was elected to the Bihar assembly in 1937 and was appointed parliamentary secretary in the ministry of Dr Sri Krishna Sinha. In 1939 he resigned the post, following the party's mandate. From 1936 to 1940 he was secretary of the Bihar PCC. He had also been a member of the AICC since 1948 and of the central parliamentary board of the party since 1950. He was jailed in 1940 and again during the "Quit India" movement in 1942 but was released in 1943 on medical grounds.

Ram, who took a keen interest in the welfare of agricultural labour, had earlier started a movement in 1937 to protect the rights of landless labour and formed the Bihar provincial khet mazdoor sabha. Between 1940 and 1946 he was also vice-president of the AITUC.

Joining Jawaharlal Nehru's interim government as a labour minister, Ram was a minister continuously for almost 30 years except for a brief period between 1963 and 1966 when he became a "casualty" of the Kamaraj plan, and when he took over the reins of the Congress presidency between 1969 and 1971. He was the second Harijan leader to take over the Congress gadi, the first being the late Mr D. Sanjivayya.

As labour minister, Ram's outspoken pronouncements on industrial relations and capitalism as he saw it drew sharp reactions both from the press and from big businessmen.

When Ram became food and agriculture minister, however, the gods smiled both on him and the country. Mr Eugene Black, then World Bank chief, had told him at the beginning of his tenure: "Two good monsoons and you will be a national hero."

By 1970, when he switched over to the defence ministry, the nightmarish food shortages were only a bad dream. His dynamic politics as food minister during 1967-70 resulted in increased wheat production from 12 to 23 million tonnes and the country piled up a buffer stock of eight million tonnes.

A crisis threatened Jagjivan Ram's political fortunes in 1969 after the Congress split when opposition leaders claimed that he had not filed income-tax returns for ten years.

Ram admitted the lapse but maintained that he had never intended to evade tax. His colleagues defended the lapse as a technical one, and a demand for a parliamentary probe was rejected by the Lok Sabha after a stormy debate.

Jagjivan Ram who represented Bihar's Sasaram reserved constituency in Parliament, won every election since 1937.

His mastery of facts, the cool and dignified confidence with which he faced the opposition and the searing sarcasm when the occasion demanded it have made him a formidable parliamentarian.

Babuji and described him as one who had shown concern for the downtrodden and socially discriminated sections of the society.

The Lok Sabha speaker Mr Balam Jhakar said, "in the death of Babu Jagjivan Ram, the country has lost a great freedom fighter, an able administrator and astute statesman whose contribution in building modern India will ever be remembered."

Mr L.K. Advani, MP and president of Bharatiya Janata Party, mourned the death of Mr Jagjivan Ram, and said with the passing away of Babuji, yet another precious link with the pre-independence era had been snapped.

"In Babuji's death," Mr Advani said, "the country has lost an able administrator, an astute parliamentarian and a resolute champion of the depressed and down-trodden."

The BJP leader, Mr Atal Bihari Vajpayee said the country has lost a far-sighted elder statesman and an outstanding administrator who lent dignity and efficiency to every office he happened to occupy.

Congress (S) general secretary,

To Ram's quality of character could be added an unusual measure of good luck. He was just before Independence when he was returning by London he had won the House of Commons vote by which he was elected to India freedom. The vote crashed in the desert in Iraq, killing all the bones in a leg. The orthopedists and he suffered long time.

In 1952, however, collapsed at an election. What the best doctors do, the fall did. It pushed located bones back place.

February 2, 1977, was a turning point in Jagjivan's political career.

It was on that day that a nation by surprise by a four-decade-old association the Congress and announcement of the formation of the Congress Democracy in collaboration some other veteran leaders like Mr H.N. and Mrs Nandini Satpathy.

The CFD, in alliance with Janata Party, routed the Congress convincingly in the general election, paving its way to power. However, Mr Ram's becoming Prime Minister materialised because of the support of Charan Singh and Desai.

The Congress (I) was back in 1980. Disillusioned by Janata, Mr Ram formed the Congress (J).

Towards the end, he headed the news when the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, received him to head a 'Punjab group'.

Today that in the death of Jagjivan Ram, the country has lost one of the most outstanding personalities in Indian politics after the attainment of independence.

The Karnataka chief minister Mr Ramakrishna Hegde expressed grief over the death of Mr Jagjivan Ram. In a message here, he said the had lost a veteran Congress leader and a freedom fighter.

The Maharashtra chief minister, Mr S.B. Chavan, said the death of Mr Jagjivan Ram, a country had lost a great freedom fighter and the most parliamentarian who occupied the supreme position of democracy for over four decades.

The national executive of the Janata Party today expressed grief at the death of Mr Jagjivan Ram.

A leader with unimpaired acumen, Babuji had been the national scene for the last decades, the executive said.

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A Thought for The Week

Man unites himself with the world in the process of crea-

tion.

— ERICH FROMM

Act Of Creation

More often than not a creative writer suggests; he does not declaim. He shuts himself in his room where he practises his craft; he does not get on to a platform to harangue others. He does not and cannot cut himself from society because no man is or can be an island unto himself; not even so introverted a writer as Kafka. But he is not an empty vessel into which society can pour anything it likes, or to use Mao Zedong's famous phrase, he is not a clean slate on which you can write whatever you like. He transmutes everything he receives from the environs around him. It is an unconscious process. A creative writer is neither a philosopher nor an ideologue. As an individual, he may be one or both; he cannot be either as a writer. These two faces can easily be demarcated in a number of great writers, in Tolstoy, for example. He was at once a great writer and a great moralist-teacher out to set the world to rights. But there was hardly any connection between the two Tolstoys. One wrote the novel *War and Peace*, one of the greatest works in history, and the other the relatively second-rate treatise on the virtues of pacifism which is added to the masterpiece as an appendix.

Just as a painter is very different from a photographer, however talented and innovative, so is a creative writer from a journalist or an academic. Artists and writers are god-like. They create. They do not reproduce; they bring into existence something that does not exist. They refashion God's creation anew — in their own image. That is why the Leninist-Stalinist concept of social realism is so phoney that even the best works produced in conformity with it are dull and dead. They amount to little more than propaganda by "other means". They are poor even as propaganda. They can appeal only to the naive and the converted. What then is the role of the creative artist and writer?

In a sense, it is a foolish question. It has been posed to the rest of us by the proponents of social realism. In order to rebut them we have had to propound a rival viewpoint. Basically the answer is simple. Adventurous individuals go up the Everest because it is there. Otherwise, they would have done something else to fulfil themselves. Artists and writers create in order to fulfil themselves. The effort is often painful and unrewarding. But they cannot help engaging in it. They are ordained, or, if you like, condemned to do what they do. In the process they bring joy and understanding to millions. But the great ones among them do not set such a goal to themselves. They are just being themselves when they create.

Alright, you will say, artists and writers do not play a role, defined by themselves or others, in society but that does not mean that they do not have a relationship with society. And what, you may ask, is that relationship? The relationship is a fact. Even if the creative writer is seen as an island unto himself, he is located in an ocean and through it is connected with other islands. But the relationship is not easy to define. The creative writer distills social experience, emphasises what he finds significant and de-emphasises what he finds less pertinent. This is a commonplace. But he is also able to look into the future. Kafka with hardly any contact with society did precisely that. He wrote long before Stalin built his Gulag Archipelago and Hitler his Belsen and Auschwitz. Kafka's works summed up in advance the horrors we have witnessed in our era.

R. K. Narayan is not our Kafka. But India is not another Soviet Russia or Nazi Germany either. It is not so tormented. Its culture and ethos are different. R. K. Narayan sums it all up in his own inimitable style which flows quietly and unobtrusively like a brook. Anyone interested in finding out what is happening in India today can turn to Narayan as if to a guide (incidentally the title of one of his novels) on a conducted tour. He will find in Narayan's works all the currents, cross-currents and confusions of values and purposes which characterise India caught in the hurricane of change. The little story we carry in this issue is illustrative. It reflects the change that has taken place in our attitude to heaven and hell. One no longer tempts and the other no longer frightens. Or are we reading too much in what for Narayan may be no more than a "little" fantasy? One cannot be sure. The reader too is a free individual. He too reads what he wants to in a creative work.

R. K. Narayan has long been regarded as the best Indian writer in the English language. The adjective Indian needs to be heavily underscored on several counts. Narayan is not an Anglo-Indian, or Indo-Anglian, he is very much an Indian which V. S. Naipaul, for example, is not. He does not write with an eye on a foreign audience, though he is published abroad and widely read abroad. He does not choose his themes and he does not develop them or to put it more appropriately, he does not distort them in order to please those in the West who continue to treat us Indians as if we were an inferior breed.

His themes are authentically Indian and he deals

with them as a self-respecting and indeed assured Indian would do. His treatment is different if he was writing in an Indian language, of course, to the extent the culture and a history from which it came divorced.

Narayan deals with big themes — all that has been happening in India — but with deep simplicity. It is sheer delight to read him.

by R. K. NARAYAN



us off on a second honeymoon.

spent in going round proffering samples of my excreta and blood and what not at the analysts. In a short while, a nice portfolio had developed detailing every inch of my inner mechanism and chemistry.

"Avoid sugar," said one doctor. "Avoid salt," said another. "Avoid hot water," "Avoid cold water," "Drink plenty of water," "Avoid smoking," "Smoke in moderation," "Avoid alcohol," "Drink in moderate

ration — sudden change of habit may produce symptoms of withdrawal," were some of the expert suggestions; also observations such as "Overweight," "Underweight," "Eat less," "Eat heartily." I got rather muddled and my normal routine life was soon gone. I fell into complete disarray, as I tried to respect and fit in all the advice and suggestions into a logical pattern. I had no time for anything but to

corner, as the portfolio of my health reports swelled to the size of an abridged edition of the Mahabharatha. My doctors came in, briskly turned the covers of the portfolio, pored over the papers and never looked at me, but uttered a word of caution before leaving, "nothing serious, but be careful and relaxed." An impossible combination.

"At last I found a physician who said, 'Nothing wrong with you. It's all purely psychological. Throw away all the medicines.

hypochondriac. How Nature a trial, and as a result." The angel definite I cannot let the other gate."

The lost soul hesitated at the other gate led to Hell, that that would be drifting in mid-air like cotton wool, he present at the portal, which was by an angel with a bidding aspect; who

Continued on P

meeting of heads of government a few months ago Delhi, speech after speech read from sacred texts had made some somewhat stuffy breeze in before the with a balding head face who com- He made an impact with his in- eloquent, but he had and presence. The your time... The char- to you has not come; time of your scheduled from the earth they You are far, far ahead Why are you here?"

"Because I'm dead. I that's all..." The angel thoughtful...

"I've no power to do Kennedy. He has cer- immaturity. What happened the charm of both are not expected to He belongs to a yet."

The man began to money gave him the "For years I was unaware to what he liked as body or its functioning, but it did not spoil know there is a dread around in a sports among mortals of fussing conventional dress, each other's birthdays. dying and had his dren bestirred themselves with girl-friends. sixtieth birthday. In spite sufficiently serious- protests, they combined to remain a playboy nise elaborate rituals. Like Nehru he his pujas and feasting on adventure. He is fond reached sixty. My wife and the wide were garlanded and made his formal edu- for photographs like ne Harvard, the London During the rituals, they Economics and Spr- on our heads gallons dred to educate him- waters collected from his travels. During rivers, crowded round of Asia and Europe he tingly, and deafened in the Khyber Pass chants, greetings, chatter in Jerusalem; he also music. Further, they two great tourist bundle us off on a second of China, Mao and moon. But this part of gramme had to be dro- all that flood of holy while energy with the ment brought on cough, remaining fresh after fever, we were bed-ridden the festivities. My work. Like him again younger, recovered and in prime minister has her feet again in a to Buddhism and weeks, but I became a person no doubt. But "Our doctor had to between to stretch the specialists at different pa- between the two too day. I had no interests of which Nehru was anticipating the doctors of which Nehru was Each doctor ordered a lot of the same pre- test on me to be carried the late Indi- by his favourite patholo- Nehru will have a devoted to him in of the modern world merit only a para-

to belittle the man his country in the nearly 15 years geographical giant shadowed by the

CONTINUATION SHEET No.....

For him it is one Canada two languages

Like Panditji Trudeau is a man of remarkable energy with the gift of remaining fresh after bouts of work. Like him again, the Canadian prime minister has been drawn to Buddhism and practises yoga. He is a very attractive person no doubt. But it would be unwise to stretch the comparison between the two too far.

In Focus

United States, by the power and the wealth of the latter country. Its vastnesses, its icy wildernesses, its great, silent forests give it a remoteness for people like us in far-away India. To such a country Trudeau has brought a certain degree of warmth and thereby a closeness to other nations. Under him Canada became a nation in its own right even though tenuously bound to Britain across the ocean, for it was he who gave it a constitution of its own.

"In his address to the Canadian Parliament in 1961, President Kennedy said rhetorically: "Geography has made us (America and Canada) neighbours. History has made us friends. Economics has made us partners. And necessity has made us allies. Those whom nature hath so joined together, let no man put asunder." Most Canadians feel that the U.S.'s affection for their country is that of Big Brother. America has an eye on its neighbour's vast resources especially in the matter of energy. Canadians, increasingly ecology conscious, have been concerned about the coastal oil spills from Alaska. Such matters have made relations between the two countries somewhat uneasy and Trudeau has consistently fought any suggestion that Canada become a U.S. satellite.

Under Trudeau Canada became a nation in its own right even though tenuously bound to Britain across the ocean.

Trudeau's most remarkable achievement has been his work for "One Canada." He is a French Canadian himself (to be more precise he is mostly French Canadian and partly Scottish) and speaks fluently both French and English. Quebec, which is predominantly French and Catholic, had under its provincial premier Levesque asked for "sovereignty association" with the federal set-up — in other words a "Frenchistan" inside Canada. But the

Continued on Page IV



Beatrice and Sidney Webb saw their mission as one of stirring the conscience of the middle classes. Poverty, they maintained, was the worst social crime of their day. Yet the paradox that faced them was that to be a successful Fabian necessitated successful socialising.

by Neville Braybrooke

BEATRICE WEBB held the view that unless a person was fulfilling some duty towards humanity, he/she had scarcely the right to live. Engraved inside her wedding ring were the words **Pro Bono Publico**, and even during their honeymoon she and Sidney continued to work on their history of the trade union movement.

The second volume of **The Diary of Beatrice Webb** opens in August, 1892 just after her marriage and runs until October, 1905. The last entry ends with a tribute to Sidney — "He is a blessed mate for me." Two further volumes are due to follow, and although Charles Trevelyan's claim made in 1898 that she was another Pepys is an exaggeration — she lacks Pepys' catholicity of interests — her diary does present a remarkable portrait of a woman who, against the growing scientific temper of the time, tries to relate all her experiences to history. Her diary she calls her "impersonal confidant."

As in the first volume, Beatrice still hankers after having "a fling at fiction." In 1895 she feels that she would like to write a novel

A salon for socialist



A STIMULATING ALLIANCE: Beatrice and Sidney Webb.

The Diary Of Beatrice Webb : Vol. 2 : Edited by
Norman and Jean MacKenzie (Virago, £18)

political salon she and Sidney ran is shown repeatedly in this volume.

Sometimes Beatrice Webb was called by her contemporaries a secular saint. Her diary makes it easier to understand exactly what they meant. Quite early she abandoned her belief in Christianity and a Christian God. Yet she never lost the habit of prayer nor her conviction that national life should have its "consciously religious side." The editors, whose notes and linking commentaries are excellent, suggested in the first volume that she had the potential of a great religieuse, but that circumstances made her instead a great social scientist. That definition remains hard to better. For Beatrice saw secular activities in religious terms. When Sidney reads aloud to her Brandt or Peer Gynt she regards "the day as "a holy-day". She also believes in a future communion of saints "here on earth". But perhaps her most interesting idea — one that for modern readers may have a positively Teilhardian ring about it — is the suggestion that good thoughts spread by good men join up and create for mankind as it were a protection "in the mysterious spiritual universe which...surrounds us."

that will foreshadow England that is, in 1975. Collectivists believes, will then be the dogma creed carried out as a course in moulding the institutions of the country; she believes that the great care of public life once only of men will have become of women. Certainly history proved her right about that. Yet the irony remains that put far more energy into a Fabian than a feminist, the start she was averse from the Fabian agenda being down with such concerns men's rights.

Men's rights. Had Beatrice become a member of a leading political firm, such as Joseph Chamberlain's, whom she had been completely infatuated as a young woman — she would have hardened herself, coarsened in a social sense. In fact that early infatuation left its mark, and for many years she was fearful that she had "relapses". All this did not prevent her speaking with complete frankness about how she thought the future would judge Joseph Chamberlain. The verdict was: "a pre-eminent parliamentarian, ill-equipped with knowledge, and damaged by an irreparable vulgarity of method and manner." Nor was she less severe in her description of the home of Chamberlain's youngest sister, who had borne in Birmingham. As she noted, empty of intellect and wealth. There was nothing to stimulate the mind but a meaningless

Beatrice and Sidney mission as one of social conscience of the middle class. Poverty, they maintain, is the worst social crime of our day. Yet the paradox of their mission was that to be a

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A Thought for The Week

Even though counting heads is not an ideal way to govern, at least it is better than breaking them.

— LEARNED HAND

Between Two Poles

Indian democracy is marking time. Or perhaps it is buying time. This is not a particularly satisfactory state of affairs. Indeed, it offends the moral and other sensibilities of millions of Indians. They are appalled that the country's public life should have become so corrupt, that its rulers, whatever their ideological affiliations, should by and large be indifferent to established democratic conventions and norms, and that opposition parties should be so inane and clueless. But need we be surprised at all this? After all, the whole country is passing through a social, economic and political revolution which is turning everything upside down. With every individual and group trying to move upward in every sense of the term, literally nothing is in place. Every kind of tie — family, caste and religion — has weakened for scores of millions of Indians. They are on their own as never before. And this a country which was supposed to be changeless only a few decades ago. Surely it is unrealistic for us to expect our public life to be immune to the winds of change sweeping the country and the uncertainty and confusion these must inevitably produce. In a way, it is worse. Many of us are clearly guilty of double standards, one for ourselves, our relations and friends and another for politicians. Earlier the ire used to be turned on businessmen and bureaucrats who were supposed to be responsible for our plight. Now it is the turn of the politicians.

It often seems that we pass on not only our frustrations but also our sense of guilt to public figures. How else can one explain businessmen known for greasing appropriate palms talking of corruption? Corruption is said to have touched a new high. Even so the businessmen beneficiaries cannot in all conscience complain. But life is not governed by logic. Even the guilty have a moral conscience. While it may be quiescent when they do their own wheeling-dealing, it is alive the rest of the time. Which is as well. For it ensures that we will continue to complain that things are not as they should be and in the process make an effort to improve the quality of our democracy. It is a heart-breaking task and it will take us decades to attain the standards we cherish. But the effort must continue. Jeremiahs are particularly useful in this regard. Without them, the country's ruling elite runs the risk of sinking into complacency.

Mrs. Gandhi is understandably critical of the Cassandras and the Jeremiahs. They, she argues, spread despair and cynicism at home and give the country a bad name abroad. She has a point. Only the rival viewpoint is equally valid. The critics are vital for the health of any system. One has to draw the line between being unduly critical and unjustifiably complacent, between sweeping condemnation and acquiescence in the lowering of standards in the name of realism. It is an extremely difficult task. One invariably tends to err on one side or the other. One is either too censorious or too indulgent. And what good can the middle-of-the-road approach do to the country? To explain is indeed to explain away. Sociology and psychology do not go well with morality. One can operate at two levels — on different occasions. But the two tend to cancel out each other. So where do we go from here? Nowhere. We oscillate between the two poles — the real and the desirable. That is life. The British know it and that largely explains the high level of tolerance in their public life.

SHEET B

Continuation Sheet No.....

SERIAL No.
OF QUESTIONS

N. B.—Every Continuation Sheet (Sheet B) should be serially numbered and carefully stitched to the Question paper (Sheet A)



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Ugly Face Of Change

Towards the end of his life Taya Zinkin asked Jawaharlal Nehru what he regarded as India's most significant achievement under his stewardship since independence. Nehru paused, as was his habit and said: education of women.

This was an apt observation, as anyone familiar with the pre-independence India will readily agree. Indian women had begun to go to colleges and universities in the earlier part of the century and under Gandhiji's leadership they had even been drawn into the freedom struggle with the result that when the country became independent, they were ready to take their place in government, legislatures, administration, diplomacy and professions. India thus became the first country to have a woman minister (Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit in U.P.) and to send a woman as an ambassador (Mrs. Pandit again). This was not an aberration, though it was obviously pertinent that Mrs. Pandit happened to be Nehru's sister. By 1951 two women had joined the country's elite services—the IFS and the IAS—and many others had moved up to senior positions in the professions, especially medicine and teaching. But the number of such women was relatively small and as a rule they came from upper middle class Westernised families. What was till then a small stream has since become an enormous river. Women's education has become quite common even in small towns, though still not in the countryside.

This is an eloquent expression of the social revolution that has been taking place in our country. It will not be quite correct to say that educated women have achieved equality with men in respect of jobs. They have not. But surprising though it may appear, they do not face the kind of discrimination which survives even today in the highly developed West. Women are paid the same wages as men for the same work; they are not confined to secretarial jobs in offices; they are as eligible to promotion to top places as men. When Mrs. Gandhi became the country's Prime Minister, it did not seem a strange development to most Indians, while a lot of foreigners, including Westerners, were appalled that the Indian people should have been so "irresponsible" as to put a woman in so high an office. How then are we to explain the atrocities to which educated women are being subjected by their in-laws and husbands and the difficulties they are experiencing in getting married?

The short answer is, of course, dowry. Never before in Indian history has the demand for dowry been so insistent and so widespread and the dowries demanded so large as today. There is hardly a day when newspapers, especially in Delhi, do not carry a report of a woman having been burnt alive or having committed suicide because her parents have been unable or unwilling or both to meet the demands of the husband and/or the in-laws. But this detestable feature of our social scene, too, is the result of the revolutionary social change and the mobility that this change has produced. Incidentally the burgeoning matrimonial columns in newspapers speak of the same social phenomenon.

Most people in India still marry among families that have known one another for a generation or two. But education is making that difficult for an increasing number of individuals, both boys and girls. So they have to find some other method of finding a "suitable" match. Since mixing in the Western sense of the term is rare even in co-educational institutions, they have come to resort to matrimonial columns. It is interesting that the English-language metropolitan papers carry far more matrimonial columns than their vernacular counterparts. This is testimony to the fact that the readers of English-language newspapers need this service more than other relatively less educated or uneducated sectors of our society. And it is among this class that the demand for dowry is most insistent and exacting. Young boys are anxious to move up the social ladder quickly and what better way to do so than the shoulders of their wives' parents or through corruption if they happen to have the right approach! To say this is to acknowledge that there is no easy way out. We have to go through the whole revolutionary circle. Meanwhile properly conceived laws and their effective implementation can help mitigate the menace provided, of course, public spirited men and women are available to assist law enforcement agencies. But there should be no illusion that these measures can resolve the problem.

Smooth Takeover

I have read with interest the article "The Policeman At The Top" (January 9). The election of the new general secretary by the central committee has again demolished the theory that such transitions in the Soviet Union are bound to be accompanied by upheavals. The orderly and expeditious appointment of Andropov and the smoothness with which the follow-up steps are being taken confirms the strength of the Soviet system.

The changes in the Politburo have resulted from natural causes — death and ill-health. The new additions to the Politburo and the central committee appear to have been made by the desire to strengthen economic administration.

DR. PREETAM S. JATELY
Bombay

MR. ANDROPOV did not mince words when he stated that he would devote "all my energies, knowledge and experience of life" to carry out the programme of constructing peace, aiding developing countries as laid down by the twenty-sixth party congress.

The new Soviet leader has made several references to the non-aligned countries. As with Brezhnev, for Andropov also peace and detente will remain at the forefront of the Soviet foreign policy line.

DR. P. DESAI
New Delhi

We Did It !

I fully endorse the views of Shobha Kilachand that the Festival of India and the Asiad have salvaged our national pride — "In Proud Plumage" (December 19). Cynics condemned the Asiad and predicted disaster. Some doubted the very ability of India to stage such a big international event. All India Radio and Doordarshan threatened to go on strike at that crucial time. Extremists tried to upset the show. On the whole, the games started with little spirit and much less encouragement or enthusiasm. For the government and for the country it was a prestige issue and a great challenge. But happily for everyone, the show proved a grand success. As Shobha said, we are not pre-destined failures, as the success of the two most important events of the century proved. Let these two events serve as stepping stones for future glories.

PRABHA PADMANABHAN
Bombay

The British Connection

MAJ. Gen. Habibullah, in his letter to the editor, (January 2) regarding Nirad Chaudhuri's article "The Hindu-Muslim Problem", has got his facts mixed up. "The Muslims in India under Moulvi Syed Ahmad Bareilvi" had not "continued the 1857 struggle" for the simple reason that Syed Ahmad Bareilvi had died in 1831 at Balakote in the north-west

frontier region fighting not against the British but, with the connivance of the British, against the Sikhs.

As for Pan-Islamism, it was imported to India by the British when they had the Turkish Caliphs, the heads of world Muslims, appeal to i) Tipu Sultan, ii) Indian Muslims in 1857, and iii) Ameer Habibullah of Afghanistan, not to fight against the British Government in India but to consider it a friend of Islam. It was only after the change in Britain's eastern policy in the last quarter of the 19th century that the liaison between Pan-Islamism and Britain gradually came to an end. (See Mohibbul Hasan's *History of Tipu Sultan*, and R. L. Shukla's *Britain, India and the Turkish Empire, 1853-1882*). The myth of Muslim theologians of India in the 19th century opposing English education and service under the British has been conclusively exposed by Sheikh Ikram, ICS, (Pakistan) in his reputed book *Mauji-Kausar* (Urdu).

As to the question of when "the Muslim-Indian began to think in territorial terms", both Nirad Chaudhuri and Syed Shahabuddin tend to ignore the transitional stages through which Muslim separatism passed before the movement for partition. Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad in his book *Masla-i-Khilafat* (The Problem of Khilafat, 1920), which served as the credo of the movement, laid emphasis not only on the religious duty of maintaining the Khilafat as the world centre of Islam but also on the urgency of establishing an Islamic state within the state, with extra-territorial affiliations in India and every country where Muslims lived but did not exercise political power.

There is nothing unique today for "an Indian Muslim (to) consider Pakistan a disaster". Now many Pakistanis consider it to be so. The late Chaudhuri Khaliquz-zaman, who became the Governor of East Pakistan, did realise the two-nation theory had never paid any dividends to us. But after the partition it proved positively injurious to the Muslims of India, and on a long-view basis for Muslims everywhere. (Pathway to Pakistan). What matters is this realisation and not the futile search for "the first proponents of the two-nation theory". Moreover, it does not need the metamorphosis of "an Indian Muslim" into "a Muslim Indian" (whatever it may mean) to be "prepared to live with it" (Pakistan). Despite the skirmishes and the outstanding issues between the two countries, this is the common, post-independence tradition.

All this, of course, does not constitute a support for Nirad Chaudhuri who is wide off the mark with his Zionist analogy.

ALI ASHRAF
Aligarh

NEXT WEEK:
Shape Of Things To C

Nuclear Menace And India
Predicament Won't Go Away

BY INDER MALHOTRA

Nuclear Menace And India Predicament Won't Go Away

ByINDER MALHOTRA

These may have been brought to the fore the nuclear issue and the grim challenges it poses to this country. The first and foremost of these is the wilful wrecking by the Reagan administration in the U.S. of the unilateral Soviet moratorium on underground nuclear testing announced eight months ago.

Mr Gorbachov persisted with the moratorium even though the U.S. mocked his initiative not once but twice, first just after Christmas and then just before Easter. Last week's "Mighty Oak" detonation in the Nevada desert, however, proved to be the proverbial last straw. Even so, while announcing the end of the moratorium, he offered to continue talking about arms control to revert to the moratorium if the Americans agreed to observe similar self-restraint.

The U.S. has responded, however, with the haughty declaration that nuclear testing would go on. In fact, a series of tests are now in an advanced stage of preparation and almost all of them are connected with the "Star Wars" scenario, otherwise called the strategic defence initiative (SDI). One, scheduled for May 8, will test a device designated "Tap" and believed to be a warhead. Devices of even greater complexity and sophistication will be tested in subsequent detonations which are likely to continue right uptil early next year.

N-Big Boys

In short, any expectation that the nuclear big boys might move, however grudgingly and gradually, towards nuclear disarmament lies shattered. On the contrary both the ABM treaty, the only genuine nuclear arms control measure agreed to by the two superpowers, and the SALT-II, which the two sides are committed to observing even though it has not been ratified by the U.S. Congress, are coming under increasingly unbearable strain. These two crucial accords cannot survive if, instead of being eliminated from earth, the nuclear arms race is exported also to outer space.

The second pertinent development to merit attention is that after nearly 14 weeks of silence on the subject, Mr Rajiv Gandhi has spoken again of Pakistan's continuing effort to build the bomb and the inexorable logic, for India, of this relentless Pakistani pursuit.

The Prime Minister's statement, in response to widespread concern expressed during the Lok Sabha's defence debate, has to be read along with an ominous report from Washington, which neither the Americans nor the Pakistanis have cared to deny.

According to this report, the U.S. ambassador-at-large, Mr Richard T. Kennedy has flatly refused to answer in an "open" congressional committee session any question relating to U.S. belief or suspicion that Pakistan has attained at its Kahuta centrifuge plant 30 per cent enrichment of uranium, in violation of General Zia's reported assurance to President Reagan that he would restrict uranium enrichment at Kahuta to 5 per cent only.

There are two points about this report which are crucial, indeed critical. First, under the established norms at the Capitol Hill, a top American official's refusal to discuss any matter during an open hearing means that whatever is being alleged is true but the administration does not want to talk about it publicly.

Secondly, and more importantly, anyone capable of enriching natural uranium to the level of 3 per cent can easily produce weapons-grade fissile material which means enrichment to a level of over 20 per cent.

The 30 per cent enrichment at Kahuta therefore has no great technological import. But its political implications are immense and far-reaching. Quite clearly, the Zia regime feels confident that it can go on expanding the frontiers of its bomb-building programme without putting at risk U.S. military assistance and political support as long as it refrains from actually detonating a nuclear device.

The third and most recent development is also the most serious, in fact blood-chilling. It is the outrageous U.S. attack on Libya which has been condemned by both foes and friends, with the solitary exception of Mrs Thatcher's Britain. But such universal condemnation has not prevented the U.S. from repeating the affront or from threatening to do it yet again.

In these circumstances, is it unreasonable to conclude that to expect nuclear weapon powers never to use their deadly arsenals *vis-a-vis* non-nuclear nations for nuclear blackmail, if not also a limited "lesson-teaching" exercise, is nothing short of a dangerous delusion? There is, however, the spectre of the nuclear winter decimating all life even in regions far removed from the scene of a nuclear exchange. All this makes utter nonsense of the cosy belief, sedulously fostered by some, that the issue of eliminating nuclear weapons is an esoteric one, concerning big powers alone, and that if only India and Pakistan can agree jointly to forswear nuclear weapons the sub-continent can afford to sleep soundly.

Against this dismal backdrop, it is both appropriate and timely that the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses should have just published a comprehensive and coherent treatise (*) on the nuclear issue, in all its aspects, especially as it affects this country in more ways than one.

Dismal Backdrop

Edited by the institute's director, Mr K. Subrahmanyam, the book does not necessarily represent the IDSA's views though all its contributors, save one, belong to it. Air commodore Jasjit Singh has discussed exhaustively and in historical perspective the threats and challenges that nuclear weapons have posed since that awesome test in the New Mexico desert 41 years ago. He has also listed no fewer than 17 occasions on which threats of use of nuclear weapons have been held out, mostly against third world countries. Mr C. Raja Mohan has argued painstakingly that nuclear-free zones have turned out to be more an illusion than a reality, while Mr P.K.S. Namboodiri has dealt with the problem of nuclear terrorism on the one hand and, on the other, nuclear perceptions and policies of India and Pakistan.

All of them have done a competent job. But it is Mr Subrahmanyam who has contributed the meatiest part of the analysis, taking up such vital questions as nuclear deterrence, role of national power, India's response to the gathering challenges and the Gorbachov proposals for the elimination of nuclear weapons by the turn of the century. The chapter clinically dissecting the endlessly controversial question of mutual inspection and verification has been written jointly by Mr R.R. Subrahmanian and Mr K. Subrahmanyam. No wonder then that the book as a whole bears the Subrahmanyam stamp.

(*) *India And The Nuclear Challenge*, edited by K. Subrahmanyam (Lancer International, Rs. 195).

views on the nuclear issue are well known, so is his formidable expertise on this highly complex and complicated subject. He has brought this to bear on the task of planning and editing the book and writing some of its most important chapters. Also, in doing so he has refreshingly refrained from being unduly vehement which is sometimes his wont. The result is a book which is extremely informative and ought to be required reading for all those who have any claim to say on this country's nuclear policy.

Whether one agrees with the collective conclusions of the contributors or not is immaterial. What matters is that the elaborate and well-reasoned arguments in support of the book's main thesis—that if this country is really serious about its struggle for eliminating nuclear weapons from the world then it must exercise its nuclear option by 1990 or five years before the present iniquitous NPT system is to become permanent—should be weighed carefully and objectively before they are either accepted or rejected. They should not be brushed aside or applauded on the basis of prejudice or preconceived notions.

"If India is to make a serious intervention in the disarmament debate and contribute to nuclear disarmament, acquiring nuclear capability is a fee that has to be paid", says Mr Subrahmanyam. The only alternative to this policy, according to him, would be to live permanently and helplessly with the nuclear weapons of "industrialised nations, their chosen client states and China", with all the risks of "coercive use of nuclear diplomacy" inherent in the situation.

India's Predicament

The foregoing, it is needless to say, is a highly simplified summing up of a long and complex presentation which needs to be examined in full. The same goes for the reasoning behind the contention that to think of India's nuclear predicament merely in Indo-Pakistan terms would be a grievous error.

In this connection a high point of the book is the admirably brief and lucid chapter on Indo-Pakistan nuclear options written by the only non-IDSA contributor, ambassador Rikhi Jaipal who has a vast experience of dealing with nuclear and disarmament issues. He has quoted irrefutable evidence to show that Pakistan's, especially Mr Bhutto's, craving for the bomb goes back to the sixties and can in no way be regarded as a reaction to Pokhran, 1974: that Pakistan's current enrichment programme has no conceivable peaceful use; that a South Asian nuclear weapon-free zone would be a legal myth; and that mutual inspection and verification between India and Pakistan would create additional irritations without solving any problem.

All in all, the IDSA book is a welcome addition to indigenous literature on the nuclear question. Most of published material on the subject is a rehash, if not a reprint, of the western position on the issue in a totally different context. The book under review examines the matter from the Indian standpoint.

It is also commendable that rather than regard his book as the last word on the subject Mr Subrahmanyam wants it to be the starting point of a great national debate. Such a debate is long overdue. And it should be devoid of sentimentality, sanctimony and self-righteousness. Only through rationality and realism can we cope with a problem that threatens the survival not only of India and Pakistan but of the entire mankind.

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As old as Harappa

Lothal seems to have been inhabited even before the Harappans colonised it, owing to its geographical position, proximity to the sea and its fertile soil.

by H. D. Sankalia

IT is indeed gratifying to see that the definitive reports on the excavations at Lothal have been published at last. Dr. S. R. Rao had the rare privilege of not only discovering Lothal during his explorations in Saurashtra, but also completing the excavations — begun in 1955 they ended in 1962.

For, as is usual with the Archaeological Survey of India, there are frequent transfers which are detrimental, as I pointed out four years ago (*The Times of India*, December 1982), to any substantial work but conservation.

Dr. Rao has given a systematic account of the actual excavation in chapters II-VIV, while chapter IX deals with the deciphering of the Indus script, the Harappan religion, trade and transport, Lothal and Mesopotamia and the origin and the end of the Harappan civilization.

The postscript deals with the author's decipherment of the Indus script.

Vol. II, Pl. XV, CCCIV is a technical nature and deals exhaustively with pottery, terra-cotta objects, tools and instruments, copper, bronze and precious objects, animal figurines, weapons, weights and beads, objects of bone, new gold and plant remains. Human skeletal remains have been dealt with by Sarkar of Calcutta.

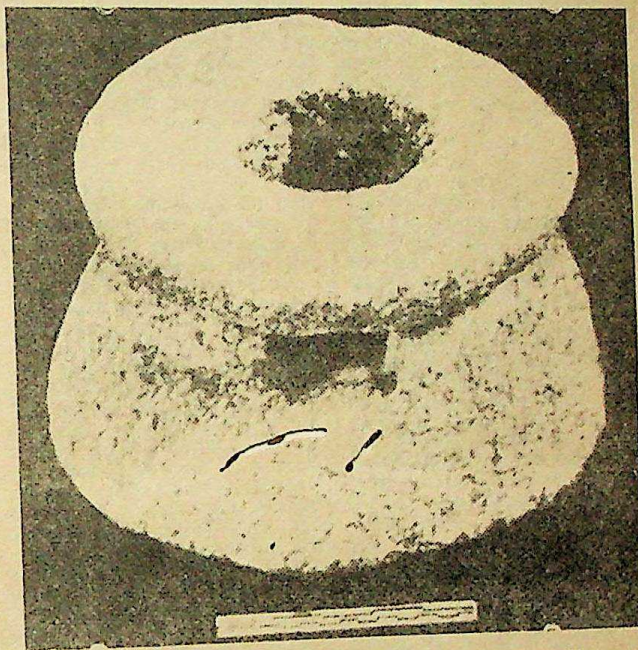
Earlier (1964) the Asia Publishing House had issued a volume on Lothal with a foreword by Sir Mortimer Wheeler, and brief accounts had appeared in *Indian Archaeology — A Review*. Thus Lothal and the interpretations of Dr. Rao are quite well-known. However, some of these need to be discussed again.

Like Mohenjodaro Lothal in Gujarati is said to signify "the mound of the dead" (Mohan-jodaro in Sindhi). It is a low, flat mound, about 45 miles southwest of Ahmedabad, on the estuary of the Bhogawa and the Sabarmati.

It seems to have been inhabited even before the Harappans colonised it owing to its geographical position, proximity to the sea and its fertile soil. Because of the sub-soil water, the houses etc. and other establishments of these "first" or earlier residents could not be fully exposed, but their pottery and stone tools testify that these were from Saurashtra itself.

The Harappans fully colonised the site: A well laid out town with streets, blocks of houses, drainage, wells and fortifications with artisans manufacturing beads of gold and carnelian.

Lothal: Volume I And II: By S. R. Rao (Archaeological Survey Of India, 1955 And 1985, Rs. 115 And Rs. 160)



ARCHAEOLOGICAL WONDER: Quern from Nevasa. The quern from Lothal is similar.

Roman world. In Gujarat, Mr. Sonvane discovered the site of their origin.

Moreover, such rotary querns have not been found in any Harappan site, and even at Lothal only one — and that too, only the upper stone — was found.

Further, Dr. (Miss) Suman Pandya during her survey of the pottery traditions in Saurashtra had found potsherds of the early historical period at Lothal.

I have elsewhere dealt with Dr. Rao's reading of the Harappan script, and his view that it is Proto-Sanskrit etc. But nothing definite can be said unless a bilingual seal is found.

Prof. S. S. Sarkar has made a fairly good study of the crania and the upper limb bones of the 18 human skeletons buried in a cemetery at Lothal. This inspired him to come to the conclusion that the population was mixed Aryan and Australian.

Recently Dr. K. A. R. Kennedy and his colleagues at Cornell University studied in great detail the human skeletons found during our excavations at Inamgaon and various Harappan sites in India and they thought that the dental structure resembled that of the people of South India ("Palaeopathology at the origins of Agriculture").

Lothal is a must for those interested in the achievements of early Indians.

Mizoram Accord: The Full Text

THE following is the unedited text of the memorandum of settlement of the Mizo question, signed on June 30 between Mr Laldenga (Mizo National Front), Mr R.D. Pradhan (the then home secretary, government of India) and Mr Lalkhama (chief secretary, government of Mizoram):

Punjab Accord

Sir.—No praise is enough to praise Mr Girilal Jain's article "Scrap Rajiv-Longowal Accord" (June 23/24). If "The accord is dead", it must be buried right now, to avoid the vultures slip-flop over it, and a new initiative is to be taken.

The new initiative must be altogether different from the old one. It must give a positive result and it must be bold and courageous. The days of reconciliation and appeasement are over. In fact they were over, the time Longowal was bulleted by terrorists. He was the man who knew and felt strong sense of nationalism.

India should, now take the example of Pakistan's rule, in spite of the majority being against the Zia government rule. Botha rules with minority support in South Africa. But we are not able to contain the terrorism even with the support of the majority. People do not want Chandigarh, people do not want Abohar and Fazilka. Uppermost in their mind is the safety and security of their kith and kin and economic well being. Obviously, all these cannot be bestowed on them by giving Chandigarh or for that matter any other area to Punjab.

Terrorists are out for Khalistan and they are not in the hands of Badal-Tohra-Amrinder or Barnala and Balwant Singh. They have never said that you give me Chandigarh and we will stop killings. Hence the only solution to the problem is deployment of the army all over Punjab and complete elimination of dubious elements from the police.

PRABHAKAR SINGH

Bombay

II

Sir—Your editorial (June 24) on the Punjab accord will find ardent support among many. You are right about the attempt of Akali dissidents to keep the explosive situation alive, to further their own selfish ends.

The law and order situation in Punjab is at its nadir, with innocents being butchered by trigger-happy fanatics. How can minorities feel secure when even the police seem to be hand-in glove with extremists.

The Central government's efforts to appease the Akalis at the cost of the Hindu community are appalling. Moreover why is the law and order machinery so enamoured of the 'due process of law' for extremists? Why not have summary trials and show an iron hand in tackling sedition? Even now, it is not too late to bring about order and reiterate the unity and integrity of India. What is needed is political will. If the Sikh extremists continue their rampage, not only will the Hindu backlash be inevitable, there would be grave danger to Sikh interests throughout India.

A. R. DHAKRISHNA

Bombay.

Preamble: 1. Government of India have along been making earnest efforts to bring about an end to the disturbed conditions in Mizoram and to restore peace and harmony.

2. Towards this end, initiative was taken by the late Prime Minister, Smt Indira Gandhi. On the acceptance by Shri Lalenga on behalf of the Mizo National Front (MNF) of the two conditions, namely, cessation of violence by MNF and holding of talks within the framework of the Constitution of India, a series of discussions were held with Shri Laldenga. Settlement on various issues reached during the course of the talks is incorporated in the following paragraphs.

Restoration Of Normalcy

3.1 With a view to restoring peace and normalcy in Mizoram the MNF party, on their part, undertakes within the agreed time-frame, to take all necessary steps to end all underground activities, to bring out all underground personnel of the MNF with their arms, ammunition and equipment to ensure their return to civil life, to abjure violence and generally to help in the process of restoration of normalcy. The modalities of bringing out all underground personnel and the deposit of arms, ammunition and equipment will be as worked out. The implementation of the foregoing will be under the supervision of the central government.

3.2 The MNF party will take immediate steps to amend its articles of association so as to make them conform to the provision of law.

3.3 The central government will take steps for the resettlement and rehabilitation of underground MNF personnel coming overground after considering the schemes proposed in this regard by the government of Mizoram.

3.4 The MNF undertakes not to extend any support to Tripura/Tribal National Volunteers (TNV), People's Liberation Army of Manipur (PLA) and any other such groups, by way of training, supply of arms or providing protection or in any other manner. Legal, administrative and other steps.

4.1 With a view to satisfying the desires and aspirations of all sections of the people of Mizoram, the government will initiate measures to confer statehood on the Union territory of Mizoram, subject to the other stipulations contained in this memorandum of settlement.

4.2 To give effect to the above, the necessary legislative and administrative measures will be undertaken, including those for the enactment of bills for the amendment of the Constitution and other laws for the conferment of statehood as aforesaid, to come into effect on a date to be notified by the central government.

Amendments

4.3 The amendments aforesaid shall provide, among other things, for the following:

(I) The territory of Mizoram shall consist of the territory specified in section 6 of the North Eastern Areas (Reorganisation) Act, 1971.

(II) Notwithstanding anything contained in the Constitution, no act of Parliament in respect of—

(A) Religious or social practices of the Mizos.

(B) Mizo customary law or procedure.

(C) Administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Mizo customary law.

(D) Ownership and transfer of land shall apply to the state of Mizoram unless the legislative assembly of Mizoram by a resolution decides: provided that nothing in this clause shall apply to any central act in force in Mizoram immediately before the appointed day.

(III) Article 170, clause (I) shall, in relation to the legislative assembly of Mizoram, have effect as if for the word 'sixty', the word 'forty' has been substituted.

5. Soon after the bill for conferment of statehood becomes law.

the President is satisfied that normalcy has returned and that conditions conducive to the holding of free and fair elections exist, the process of holding elections to the legislative assembly will be initiated.

6. (A) The Centre will transfer resources to the new government keeping in view the change in status from a Union territory to a state and this will include resources to cover the revenue gap for the year.

(B) Central assistance for plan will be fixed taking note of any residuary gap in resources so as to sustain the approved plan outlay and the pattern of assistance will be as in the case of special category states.

7. Border trade in locally produced or grown agricultural commodities could be allowed under a scheme to be formulated by the central government, subject to international arrangements with neighbouring countries.

8. The inner line regulations, as now in force in Mizoram, will not be amended or repealed without consulting the state government.

Other Matters

9. The rights and privileges of the minorities in Mizoram as envisaged in the Constitution, shall continue to be preserved and protected and their social and economic advancement shall be ensured.

10. Attempts will be taken by the government of Mizoram at the earliest to review and codify the existing customs, practices, laws or other usages relating to the matters specified in clauses (A) to (D) of para 4, 3 (II) of the memorandum, keeping in view that an individual Mizo may prefer to be governed by acts of Parliament dealing with such matters and which are of general application.

11. The question of the unification of Mizo inhabited areas of other states to form one administrative unit was raised by the MNF delegation. It was pointed out to them, on behalf of the government of India, that Article 3 of the Constitution of India prescribes the procedure in this regard but that the government cannot make any commitment in this respect.

12. It was also pointed out on behalf of the government that as soon as Mizoram becomes a state.

(I) The provisions of part XIV in Constitution will apply and the state will be at liberty to adopt any one or more of the languages in use in the state as the language to be used for all or any of the official purposes of the state;

(II) It is open to the state to move for the establishment of a separate university in the state in accordance with the prescribed procedure;

(III) In the light of the Prime Minister's statement at the joint conference of the chief justices, chief ministers and law ministers held at New Delhi on 31st August, 1985, Mizoram will be entitled to have a high court of its own, if it so wishes.

13. (A) It was noted that there is already a scheme in force for payment of ex-gratia amount to heirs/dependents of persons who were killed during disturbances in 1966 and thereafter in the Union territory of Mizoram. Arrangements will be made to expeditiously disburse payment to those eligible persons who had already applied but who had not been made such payments so far.

(B) It was noted that consequent on verification done by a joint team of officers, the government of India had already made arrangements for payment of compensation in respect of damage to crops, buildings destroyed/damaged during the action in Mizoram and rental charges of buildings and lands occupied by the security forces. There may, however, be some claims which were preferred and verified by the above team but have not yet been settled. These pending claims will be settled expeditiously. Arrangements will also be made for payment of pending claims of rental charges on lands/buildings occupied

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Female Foeticide In India

Sex-Determination Leads The Way

By ACHIN VANAIK

IN a recent television interview on sex-determination (SD) tests, one social activist and member of the Women's Centre in Bombay, Ms Vibhuti Patel, effectively dramatised the problem when she declared that such tests followed by abortion of female foetuses would soon render women in India an "endangered species". A permissible exaggeration perhaps if it succeeds in conveying the seriousness of the problem and the rate at which such selective abortions are growing. As it is, India is one of only four countries where an already adverse female-male ratio has been getting worse over the last 60 years. Today there are some 936 women to every 1000 Indian men. Furthermore, infant mortality in this country especially of females, is one of the highest in the world.

In less than five years what began as an esoteric and largely unknown technique of chromosomal analysis to detect genetical abnormalities (amniocentesis) has now become big business with an ever expanding clientele. What records exist are gross underestimates of the scale of the problem. This is so because clinics where sex-determination tests are carried out for prices ranging from Rs 500 to Rs 5,000 are not usually the places where the abortions are carried out. So accurate records of selective abortions are not available.

SD Tests

Once the foetus is discovered to be a female, the pregnant mother often goes to a government or municipal hospital to have the abortion. Of course, there private SD clinics which also carry out abortions on request and these provide some statistical evidence, of the dimensions of the issue. Almost a 100 per cent of 15,914 abortions during 1984-85 carried out by a well-known abortion centre in Bombay were undertaken after SD tests. There are now SD clinics in almost every medium sized town in Maharashtra and often as many as four or five in a town, with their numbers likely to grow. While these clinics extract the test samples, the chromosomal verification is done elsewhere, usually in Bombay which has around 20 such laboratories or centres, compared to three centres three years ago.

This problem of SD tests and selective abortion, or female foeticide, as it is aptly called, has at least three dimensions—misuse of science and technology, social oppression of women and abuse of human rights. The definitive study of this growing evil has been done by Dr R.P. Ravindra of the SNTD Pharmacy College. All subsequent discussion and writing, (including this article) have been largely derivative and greatly indebted to his pioneering work. Unfortunately, public awareness continues to be extremely low and given the extremely backward social values that predominate, particularly the low social esteem attached to female children, it will be an uphill battle to stop what could easily become a flood of female foeticides. As such the problem constitutes a major challenge to progressive women's health and social welfare groups as well as to the government both at the

Centre and in the states.

To try and put a stop to such selective abortions does not mean that the legal right of women to safe abortion in general, should be jeopardised. But this right, embodied in the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, must now clearly be restrained in such a way as to prevent such discriminatory biases. Though SD tests are legally supposed to be only for checking genetic abnormalities in the foetus, this restriction is completely ignored. There have to be amendments to the MTP Act which will lay down much more stringent conditions under which such tests can be carried out.

For example, only government-run hospitals should be allowed to carry out SD tests. Such tests should only be done for the purpose of detecting genetic abnormalities. The sex of the foetus should not be revealed to the patient. And all records of such tests and abortions should be scrupulously kept and made available by law to any genuine and properly constituted women's, health, and social welfare group so that they can play a watchdog role in preventing misuse of power by hospital authorities or individual doctors and nurses.

Such "nationalisation" of SD tests, as it were, will not prevent unscrupulous private clinics from carrying out such tests or underground centres of chromosomal analysis from emerging. But it will deprive them of the legitimacy they now enjoy and make life much more difficult for those who wish to promote the "big business" of female foeticide. Obviously, penalties for breaking such newly framed laws must be extremely severe, if they are to have the necessary deterrent effect.

Growing Evil

Such steps should not be confused with measures of compulsory population control which are obviously counter-productive. Quite apart from the lessons of the emergency period, it is now clear that the one-child per family drive in China with its attendant system of compulsory disincentives only promoted an increase in the rate of female infanticide, but in this case, the right to abortion or the freedom to plan the family is not challenged. What is challenged is the attempt to do so in a sexually discriminatory manner. This is why the ideological justifications put forward by many prominent doctors who do carry out such tests and selective abortions are particularly nauseating.

They have taken refuge behind the laxity of the law as it currently framed and in the argument that such tests (and selective abortions) are desired by the patient herself as part of family planning. Such cynical and self-serving justifications by doctors must, of course, be dismissed with the contempt that they deserve. But it does highlight the fact that the fundamental problem remains ideological rather than legal or medical since newer and safer methods of SD are being developed all the time. As such, the problem is intimately connected to the wider issue of women's oppression in society and the internalisation of such oppression by women

themselves. While such internalised acceptance is to be found among women everywhere, the strong bias for male children to the extent that female foeticide and infanticide are widespread, is much more specific to Asia, and to a lesser extent Africa and South America.

Complex Task

It is obvious therefore that any sustained campaign to eliminate the evil of female foeticide in this country must also address itself to these larger issues of female oppression and the whole value system whereby sons are preferred to daughters. This, of course, is a much more complex task. The campaign against amniocentesis (operating from the women's centres) has already got off the ground in cities like Bombay. But even as it mobilises for specific changes in the MTP Act, and against centres which carry out such operations, it must also seek to expose the whole question of patriarchal control over women's reproductive capacities. In the modern era this has taken many forms from hormonal contraceptives for women (whose side-effects are largely unknown) to injectible contraceptives, implants, and now SD tests. At the heart of the problem, as Dr Ravindra has pointed is whether a male-dominated society should have control (direct and indirect) over questions of female conception, their timing, sex etc. or women themselves? Similarly, there is the related question of who decides the relevance of scientific research into these areas of reproduction? Given women's status as the "second sex", it is not surprise that research into hormonal contraception has been directed towards affecting the hormonal balance of women rather than men as a way of controlling reproduction. At the very least, further research in this country into areas like methods of sex determination should be banned.

However, even this may not be enough. So rapid are the technological advances that society may already be moving from the era of sex-determination to pre-natal sex selection; this is the meaning of what have been called the new reproductive technologies (NRTs), which involve "extracting eggs from ovaries of genetic mothers, manipulating them and transferring them to suitable incubators." The social implications or possibilities of such "advances" are, to say the least, alarming. It will become possible for women to sell reproductive capacities in the same way that prostitutes today sell sexual capacities. Surrogate motherhood i.e. women "breeders", especially from the third world, can move out from the pages of science fiction into real life. In India, the future can represent an extremely dangerous synthesis of backward social values and modern technology. A decade ago female foeticide might have been looked upon with a degree of revulsion. Today it enjoys growing respectability. There is no reason why pre-selection of the sex of the unborn child might not also be seen as an acceptable norm which it is the right of every citizen, rich or poor, to exercise as he (more than she) sees fit.

Washington A Strange Capital

Where Columnists Change Policies

By SIMON HOGGART

WASHINGTON IS possibly the only city in the world where newspaper columnists are taken seriously and indeed are studied with the same care Kremlinologists devote to *Pravda*. The worst thing that happened to Mr George Bush's presidential campaign this year was not his gaffe about the need to raise oil prices: it was a rude article written by the conservative columnist, George Will, a signal to the New Right that it was now O.K. to despise Bush.

Similarly the conservative commentators, Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, Novak's nickname here is "the prince of darkness", are conned meticulously by those who need to know exactly what the right-wing is up to.

Twin Terrors

So when, on May 13, the twin terrors published a leaked report of a private meeting about Nicaragua held on Capitol Hill, the hardline right-wingers of Washington were dramatically alerted to a peril they were facing. According to experts who have followed the twists and turns of the Nicaraguan story, it was this column more than any other event which fired the critical battle in the State Department—a battle which the right-wing almost certainly won last week.

The gist of the Evans and Novak piece was that the administration was dangerously close to doing a deal with the Sandinista government. The victim being roasted by Republican congressmen at the Capitol meeting was president Reagan's well-liked and trusted itinerant ambassador, Philip Habib, the man who earlier this year helped see off president Marcos from the Philippines. Habib is no liberal, but he is a pragmatist.

He had been appointed by the secretary of state, George Shultz, to tour Central America (with the exception of Nicaragua, naturally) and to see if a peace deal could be worked out. Reagan and his advisers did not think for one moment that it could, but they were happy for Habib to go. It made Mr Reagan's well-touted commitment to peaceful change look sincere and might help persuade an unwilling Congress to vote aid to the Contras.

Then, to everyone's surprise, against all the odds, it looked as if a deal might be on. On April 11, Habib announced in a letter that the U.S. would be ready to suspend help to the Congress if Nicaragua signed a regional peace treaty—a non-aggression pact with its neighbouring states. This news appalled Mr Reagan's keenest supporters in the House of Representatives, who had spent the previous few months twisting arms and pulling strings, only to see themselves apparently abandoned by the president.

A fortnight later, Habib was summoned to the Capitol Hill to account for himself. By this time the conservatives were facing a second shock: it seemed as if the Nicaraguan government, under pressure from Cuba and the Soviet Union, might actually sign the peace deal (the "Contadora agreement" in the arcane jargon of the subject.)

The terror that peace might descend on Central America was described by Evans and Novak: "The agreement would clear the way for a

long breathing space during which the Marxist-Leninist regime could build its power, stabilise its economy and get rid of remaining internal enemies—stripping away what few freedoms remain The only U.S. policy is to hope that the Sandinistas will stonewall."

In short, the Reagan administration had impaled itself. Habib, having been packed off south by his boss George Shultz, to negotiate in good faith, was about to ruin everything by succeeding. The right, led by Jack Kemp, the ultra-hardline Republican from New York who hopes to succeed Reagan in 1989, was enraged. Kemp wrote to Reagan at the end of May, demanding that Habib be sacked. The diplomat, he said had become personally identified with a policy direction that cannot be sustained.

Minutes after the letter arrived in the White House, Larry Speakes, the president's spokesman, offered solid public backing for Habib. Even as he expressed this warm support, however, the State Department was a morass of plots and conspiracies designed to destroy Habib's efforts.

Counter-Coup

The man in charge of the counter-coup was Elliott Abrams, a far-right-winger who is assistant secretary of state in charge of Latin America. Abrams realised that now, more than ever, Congress had to give the \$100 million aid for the Contras—not because the money will be remotely adequate to fund a military victory (for example Red-Eye missiles, used to down helicopters, cost \$20,000 each)—but because it would immediately destroy any chance of the Sandinistas signing the peace agreement.

Abrams leaked an attack on Habib to the *Washington Post*, saying that his suggestion that aid to the Contras might stop was an error and imprecise. Leaking is a skilled, almost ritualised art form in Washington, and this—coming a fortnight after the Evans and Novak column—was a sign to the right that the battle had been joined.

Abrams is a clever and resourceful young man of 38. He is passionately convinced that the tide of communism can, and must, be turned. He is not, however, tremendously popular on Capitol Hill. In order to win the critical vote, it was necessary to use the conservatives' most powerful weapon—president Reagan himself.

The president has spent more time on Nicaragua than on almost any other foreign affairs issue—this year probably more than on arms control. Like Abrams, he is convinced that communism can be stopped. He will take it as a personal failure if the Sandinistas are still in power when he leaves office. He got to work on the phone.

The list of vacillating congressmen had been drawn up with care by the White House and their allies in the Capitol, and there were numerous sweeteners on offer: maybe a speech by Mr Reagan for a Republican facing a difficult reelection fight this November, perhaps a juicy defence contract for a Democrat. Such murmured promises are known as "pork" in the trade and there are few congressmen who do not wish to dip into the barrel.

Bizarrely, all this arm-twisting was taking place amid a stream of revelations about disgraceful misbehaviour by the Contras. The administration has steadily ignored the mounting evidence of torture, murder and terrorism by the "freedom fighters" writing it off as over-zealousness inevitable in war.

Some of the clearest evidence, however, concerns money: Contra leaders have been skimming off millions of dollars previously voted by Congress for humanitarian aid. The general accounting office (GAO), a non-partisan government body, has traced huge sums to private accounts in the Cayman islands and the Bahamas.

The GAO also discovered that nearly a million dollars of the Contras' humanitarian aid fund had gone to the Honduras armed forces—implying strongly that the money had been spent illegally on arms. The administration has, in effect, ignored these charges and even tried to cover them up: the White House even opposed the GAO's efforts to subpoena bank accounts in Miami. Meanwhile it redoubled its work to get the Contra aid through the House.

Their difficulties were enhanced by the resolute refusal of the American people to share Ronald Reagan's anxieties. The latest poll showed 62 per cent against aid, and only 29 per cent for.

To make things easier, the package was linked to \$300 million aid for four other Latin American nations, and the Contras' \$100 million was offered in stages—rather than all at once. These changes made it easier for a few dithering congressmen to switch their votes. Others were frightened by the intensive advertising campaign being run by right-wing groups on radio and TV—adverts which targeted the undecided congressmen.

Hidden Agenda

The \$100 million will not be enough to defeat the Sandinistas. A military victory for the Contras is simply not on. However, American's "hidden agenda" will continue to go through. According to this barely-concealed plan, Contras will soak up more manpower and money, making the Sandinista government even less popular than it is already and—hopefully, from the US point of view—driving it towards yet more repressive measures. Anti-Sandinista demonstrations ending in bloodshed would suit the scenario perfectly. A breakdown in Managua would allow Washington to recognise the Contra "government" in-exile and remove the last impediment to a direct attack on the Sandinistas.

Larry Birns, of the influential council on hemispheric affairs, believes that the US government will become increasingly frustrated by the Contras' inability to topple president Ortega before Mr Reagan's time is up. He foresees a staged provocation ending with the Sandinistas crossing in force into Honduras. "Honduras would then turn to Washington and ask for military assistance which the US would willingly give. It would convert direct American involvement from a possibility to a near certainty." By arrangement with *The Observer*.

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Sex and scent

A 'BRAVE new World' more fantastic than what Aldous Huxley had envisaged in his fiction bearing the same title has now swum into the ken. Huxley, with his fervid imagination, had visualised "talkies" laced with "smellies" and "touchies". The audience, it was predicted, would not only see and hear the stars of the silver screen but also smell their fragrance and be able to reach out and touch them in the flesh in the three-dimension projections. Now a new perfume is about to be marketed, the very smell of which will lead to a strong sexual arousal in men and turn the randy ones into sex maniacs. Watch out Chanel! Two manufacturers, one in Britain and the other in the U.S., claim that they are adding a new ingredient to their scents that might make them the ultimate perfume: an irresistible aphrodisiac.

Chicago-based Jovan Inc., reports 'Businessweek', has already introduced one fragrance called Andron containing pheromones a kind of chemical that evokes behavioural responses in some animals and just might do the same in humans. And a small British company, Medical Express UK Ltd., is about to launch its Pheromone entry, Muskone Ph-5. It is negotiating distribution rights with U.S. retailers, aiming to introduce the product early next year. Andron is doing superbly.

The fragrance which comes in Men's and Women's versions and sells for about 7.50 dollars per ounce, has taken the market by storm. As for Muskone Ph-5 which also comes in Male and Female versions, Medical Express Managing Director, Gregory M. Butcher, asserts that prospective U.S. distributors estimate first-year sales could reach 80 million dollars. No statistical survey in depth has yet been made of the behavioural responses of these perfumes, but judging from what Andron users experience, the stuff is really terrific.

The grisly details are not documented, but it is whispered that a whiff of Andron could be more potent than the famed "pan masala" of the decadent nawabs of old, who knew a thing or two about sex, both of the normal and the perverted variety. Many perfume manufacturers are now on the hot scent of aphrodisiacs. The Fragrance-Foundation of the United States will soon launch another study to try to document the link between scent and sex. The world awaits the results with bated breath and a pounding heart for sex to raise its ugly hood to its full length.

—human lives. Weak governments end up killing more people than strong ones: Sardar Patel pacified Punjab—too, too, disturbed by the Akalis—with words alone. The onent knew he meant business and that he spoke for the an state with all its coercive power.

meddling in... Barnala faces. Obviously he also needs to carry out a deft purge of dubious elements in his own government. And that will test his leadership as nothing else.

Journey To Beginning

She had learnt to love the Kulu valley ages ago—way back in the late twenties and early thirties when she was still a young girl. Along with her mother she had ridden up and down its sylvan environs, then utterly unspoilt and relatively unknown. And she had done so in style. For her father, General (later Field-Marshal) Chetwode was Commander-in-Chief in India and the first occupant of the house at Teen Murti which is now Nehru Museum. In 1933, even before the Field-Marshal's retirement, his daughter, Penelope, went home. She married John Betjeman, later to be Britain's poet laureate, and plunged into a new life. To two things, however, she stuck tenaciously: her maiden name and the haunting vision of the valley in the western Himalayas. Three decades on, she returned to India to revisit the land she had constantly dreamed about. This time she was on her own. Battling with the bureaucracy for permits added spice to the second journey through her very special scenic paradise. The result was a superb and scintillating book, *Kulu, The End Of The Habitable World*, which vividly captures the valley's beauty and charm. She was to come to India several times later, most notably in 1983, as Indira Gandhi's personal guest at the golden jubilee of the Indian Military Academy, Dehra Dun, her father had founded. She came yet again some weeks ago—this time specifically to trek in her beloved Kulu. On Sunday at the picturesque Jalouri pass she complained of being tired, jumped off her horse and went to sleep, never again to wake up. In pursuance of instructions left behind by her, she was cremated on the spot. Appropriately enough her ashes are to be scattered all over the Kulu valley, eventually to mingle with the waters of Beas.

Mr Gandhi's Choices

The selection of Congress candidates for the second round of biennial elections to the Rajya Sabha provides a clue to the Prime Minister's preferences or otherwise. Of the decisions made the most important is the denial of re-nomination to Mr Kamalapati Tripathi. Already it is being said that Mr Tripathi has been punished for questioning the Prime Minister's style of functioning. If that is so, it can only be regarded as an unchivalrous and awkward way of answering Mr Tripathi. In May, the Congress working committee was summoned ostensibly to deal with the problem created by the leakage of Mr Tripathi's letter of April 22 to the Prime Minister. But the party top brass was reluctant to rap the old man on the knuckles. If a denial of a Rajya Sabha seat now is simply meant to drive home the point as to who calls the shots in the party, then it is a rather unimaginative way of going about it. For it would be wrong to believe that Mr Tripathi's stature or his challenge can be diminished by keeping him out of the Rajya Sabha. For the time being, Mr Tripathi has pretended to be completely satisfied with the parliamentary board's decision and has advised Congressmen to behave in a disciplined manner. But he too could be playing politics, that is biding his time. The exclusion of Mr Sitaram Kesari, the A-ICC treasurer and a minister of state, is a different matter. It has more to do with the correlation of forces in the Bihar politics than to Mr Gandhi's own likes and dislikes.

The Prime Minister has used this opportunity to reward faithfuls like Mrs Najma Heptulla who proved useful during the controversy on the Muslim Women's Bill. Mrs Veena Verma, widow of former AICC secretary, Mr Srikant Verma, has been included for obvious sentimental reasons. This was also an opportunity to induct those talented individuals who otherwise would be reluctant to undertake the rumble-tumble of electoral politics. The most interesting among these is the inclusion of Mr Laxmikant Jha from Bihar. Mr Jha is a distinguished economist and an experienced administrator. Since he was already an adviser to the Prime Minister on economic matters, the obvious inference is that Mr Gandhi wants to make an even better use of his talents. Despite his 72 years, Mr Jha remains capable of considerable hard work and fresh thinking. The old veteran has never hidden his ideological preferences. He has always favoured a freer economy and closer ties with the west, especially the United States. Thus his selection could also mean that the Prime Minister wants to send out unmistakable signals for as important individuals and groups in and out of the country. But above all, Mr Gandhi appears to have taken his own decisions. He is even bringing Captain Satish Sharma, his old friend from the Indian Airlines days, into the Rajya Sabha.

The scenario is sickeningly familiar. During the seventies and early eighties, the patronage of certain highly placed Congressmen eventually turned Bhindranwale into a Frankenstein and led to the chain of tragedies that culminated in the end of Congress rule in Punjab. Today a section of the "moderate" Akali leadership seems to be swayed by a similar death-wish. The stakes are high. Gunmen and gangsters in Punjab pose a threat to the security of not only the state and the country but, more so, to that of the Akali ministry itself. Their determined assault on the life of the chief minister and his cabinet colleagues on March 26 at Anandpur Sahib leaves no room for doubt on the score. Mr Barnala is evidently aware of the odds. He has let it be known that he has himself asked for and obtained the services of Mr J.F. Rebeiro to head the police force in Punjab and given him a free hand. The results are visible. Mr Rebeiro appears to be beginning to succeed, at least to some extent, in restoring the morale and cohesion of the force as well as in improving the quality of intelligence at its disposal. Though the terrorists still continue their depredations, the police no longer look helplessly the other way. They have joined the battle.

But this is not enough. The war against terrorism in Punjab cannot be won unless Mr Barnala and other moderate Akali leaders ferret out and lick the enemy within. Fortunately, a good deal is known already about the links between certain Akali politicians and organised criminals of all kinds. But that does not mean that it will be easy for Mr Barnala to break the nexus. The balance of forces within the Akali Party is such that he will have to tread warily. Already two of his senior colleagues—the finance minister, Mr Balwant Singh, and the education minister, Mr Sukhjinder Singh—are said to be gunning for Mr Rebeiro. Protecting the police and the state administration from such misguided meddling is only a part of the formidable challenge that Mr Barnala faces. Obviously he also needs to carry out a deft will test his leadership of nothing else.

The authorities appear to have finally decided to grapple with the main source of the continuing crisis in Punjab—the underworld gangs who stalk the land as if it belongs to them. The Minister's telephonic conversation with the state chief minister on Monday was the first clear indication that Mr Gandhi would no longer allow the search for a formula whereby Chandigarh could be transferred to Punjab to detract him from attending to what should always have been his first priority in the state—law and order. Mr Gandhi followed his blunt talk with Mr Barnala with a detailed discussion of security problems in Punjab with his experts on Tuesday. And on Thursday came the statements by Mr Kamalapati Tripathi and Mr Arjun Singh, which together left little room for doubt that the atmosphere had changed in Delhi in favour of greater realism.

Mr Tripathi still remains the working president of the Congress Party. But he does not speak for the ruling group. In this case, he has spoken for the nation. He had given expression to the desperation of the Indian people. Their patience with Mr Barnala is exhausted and their confidence in him badly shaken. Mr Tripathi has given him two choices—he cannot end terrorism in one month. He should either go down and make way for President's rule or call in the army. This is a reasonable proposition, though it should not be interpreted rigidly. While it may not be possible for Mr Barnala to end terrorism altogether in one month or even six months, it should be possible for him to show worthwhile progress in that period. If he cannot, the conclusion would be obvious: the task is beyond him.

Mr Barnala is said to be a good and sincere man who is as genuinely interested in preserving the country's unity as he is in ensuring Akali power in Punjab. We have no need to dispute this view of his intentions. But we feel obliged to point out two facts. First, that as chief minister he has been responsible for much of the mischief in Punjab. He released thousands of people suspected of being terrorists, extremists, smugglers and their supporters and put many of them into an already communalised and demoralised police force. The argument that he was under pressure from fellow Akalis and fellow Sikhs cannot answer the charge. Those who might feel that we are exaggerating should read the carefully worded statements of one of the country's most respected policemen, Mr Ribeiro, currently director-general of the Punjab police. Secondly and even more pertinently, Mr Barnala has among his cabinet colleagues and Akali legislator-supported men who continue to maintain their old links with terrorists, extremists and smugglers and to interfere in the working of the police on behalf of their patron-clients. Again, we are not saying that Mr Barnala should be packed off. But we regard it as necessary to reaffirm our position that we must not pin too much hope on him. He is constrained by his colleagues and is an instrument at his disposal has long been largely blunted. The advocates of the so-called political solution owe it to themselves (and the nation) to answer these specific questions and not try to terrorise us into silence by inventing ghastly pictures of what might have happened if the so-called political process had not been resumed in Punjab and Mr Barnala had not been thrown up by that "bountiful" process as a potential saviour.

We are not so naive as not to know the limitations of the army in dealing with the kind of situation that prevails in Punjab. The army is trained and equipped to fight external enemies. It has to operate in formations of a certain minimum size. And it must feel free to use the deadliest weapons at its command. When it is called in to assist civilian authority to enforce law and order, it cannot function in the manner it is expected to in fulfilment of its normal duties. We are also fully aware that an army is an elite institution and, in order to keep it effective, we must not expose it to too prolonged a contact with the turbulence and corruption of our society. But there are occasions when the awesome power and majesty of the mighty Indian state must be put on display so that the enemy of the state knows what he is up against in the final analysis. Such demonstrations should be limited, ideally they should not be necessary. The police should be able to represent the power of the Indian state. Then we have the paramilitary forces. But unfortunately we have allowed our police forces to run down and in certain instances the paramilitary forces are not able to instil in the necessary amount of fear. In situations like the one that obtains in the border districts of Punjab, a concentrated use of force is also often the most economic in terms of human lives. Weak governments end up killing more people than strong ones. Sardar Patel pacified Punjab—too, disturbed by the Akalis—with words alone. The government knew he meant business and that he spoke for the state with all its coercive power.

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She had learnt in the late twentieth century young girl. Along down its sylvan and unknown. And General (late Commander-in-Chief) house at Teen Murti even before the Penelope, went to be Britain's poet things, however, and the haunting Himalayas. There the land she had was on her own added spice to the scenic paradise scintillating beauty which vividly came was to come to 1983, as Indira Gandhi of the Indian Movement founded. She came specifically to the picturesque Jaldighat ped of her horse. In pursuance of cremated on the be, scattered all with the waters.





